

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

JANUARY 20, 1940

WHO'S WHO

THOMAS P. CALLAGHAN estimates that he has listened to about 1,500 divorce cases. He is a reporter on a large metropolitan daily and has been engaged in newspaper work for some eight years. Interrogated as to the possible comebacks on his story, he states: "I would have the support of every realistic observer of probate court proceedings." Divorce is a festering wound, and there is no sacredness about it. . . . BOXHOLDER covers the identity of a gentleman who follows the political line-ups as a hobby. He is a fan who likes to get near the field and watch the signals. He tries not to be a partisan, nor to have a choice of teams. . . . THOMAS F. MEEHAN thinks back to the first days when any new incident occurs. At eighty-five, he is the President of the United States Catholic Historical Society, and primemover in all its publications and activities. . . . ARNOLD LUNN, apparently, did not travel down through Turkey into Palestine, as previously reported in this column. His latest note states that he is back in Rome. But he had been down and around the Balkan States, and offers our readers his observations and gossip. These sidelights, we trust, are of some value to readers who are seeking an understanding of complex Europe. . . . EILEEN EGAN spent some months in Portugal last summer, where she studied the government and the people. She returned vastly enthusiastic. Graduated from Hunter College, New York, she took courses at the University of Michigan. She is a member of the Catholic Evidence Guild, New York, and has published fiction and articles on serious subjects. . . . JOHN E. DINEEN is an English instructor at St. Joseph's College, Philadelphia, Pa. He has previously appeared in these columns.

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COMMENT

IT IS not agreeable to us, either to criticize the British and Canadian press, or to be criticized by them. We are disturbed, likewise, by the number of letters we receive from Canadian, English and French sources, condemning our views on the present European war. Vainly, we have endeavored to establish the fundamental principle that guides us in our editorial policy: we do not believe that the United States is justified in military participation in the present war, under existing conditions. We respect the views of Englishmen who believe that England is justified. We do not dispute the convictions of Canadians who favor the Canadian entry into the conflict. We would ask our brethren in the British Commonwealth to accept our beliefs about the welfare of our own country and about our interpretation of the international situation. AMERICA is not responsible for every American utterance. It is not to be judged by the opinions of other organs of Catholic opinion. But the editors of AMERICA have had long and most serious conferences determining what they consider to be the best American policy in the European tragedy. A friendly Canadian critic gives us encouragement. He writes: "My best wishes for you in your difficult task, *re* the editorial policy on the war. I think that if you keep hammering at the point that your attitude is for the American Catholic and not for the Canadian or the British or the French, that you will be on solid ground. Here in Canada we are at war, and we are convinced that it is a just war." We appreciate the motives that inspire Canada and England and France. We join their resentment against Hitlerism and Stalinism, and honor their decision to fight against these evil movements. That is their decision. We must make our own. And we shall not be moved by another correspondent who writes: "The Allies are fighting the Americans' cause. The Americans cheered for Chamberlain at Munich. Yet they were sore at 'the perfidious compromise.' Now that we are fighting to overthrow paganism, whether à la Hitler or à la Stalin, they will not lift their little finger. What a selfish bunch!" These are, comparatively, mild accusations. Other correspondents are more vehement. To all of them we say: "Gentlemen, we do not choose to war."

CRITICAL and careful attention ought to be given to the unexplained refusal of the Federal Census Bureau to permit the inclusion of questions concerning religion in the Census of 1940, though details of family budgeting, inside plumbing and other personal matters are considered fully worthy of attention. Writing to the *Washington Post*, Louis Kenedy, chairman of the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, relates how negotiations have been carried on for years with

the officials of the Census Bureau on this point, who gave "virtual assurance that favorable action would be taken. As it is," says Mr. Kenedy—whose letter is reproduced by the N.C.W.C. News Service—"one has difficulty escaping the conclusion that the Statisticians' Association and the interested religious bodies were being taken for a ride." Mr. Kenedy quotes at length from his correspondence with Alfred Friendly, staff writer for the Bureau, and notes the captious and contradicting objections that appear to have been concocted, as well as misrepresentations of the attitude of the various religious bodies. Mr. Kenedy points out that the need for a thoroughly scientific religious census, so urgent at the present time, was notoriously not supplied by the religious census of 1936. The inclusion of these elementary inquiries does not mean the involvement of the Government in denominational religious matters. It does mean some slight recognition of the part that religion has played in the development of our nation; and "it is inconceivable that our representatives in Government will ignore a united plea of more than half of our citizens who are ready and willing to declare themselves as God-fearing men and women." The true story of this refusal is a matter which might well be brought to the attention of Congress.

AFTER a tie-up that lasted fifty-four days, work on the San Francisco waterfront resumed on January 5. Various estimates of the resultant financial loss to the entire city are calculated in terms of \$100,000,000. How much of that sum meant loss in wages to working people cannot be definitely determined, because the Christmas season is usually the peak period of employment, and how many casual workers failed to find work because of the strike cannot be estimated. Great as this definable loss was to San Francisco, there is another factor about the continual waterfront disturbance that must be taken into account. This seething unrest has brought about a loss of prestige and good will to the San Francisco Bay area. No new industries are going to locate in that section and hazard the continual losses that result from strikes. Already many industries that located there in better times have moved away. Worker and employer must see their best interests demand that they get together to formulate a plan to prevent these recurrent stoppages.

COMMEMORATING the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Pan-American Union, the Post Office Department, according to Postmaster James A. Farley, is to issue a special stamp on April 14 to signalize the occasion. Inasmuch as more cordial

relationship between the nations of the Western Hemisphere has resulted from its efforts, the Union has amply justified its purpose during this period of years. The commemorative stamp will unquestionably promote the Administration's "Good Neighbor" policy and strengthen the ties of friendship. In fact, the cordial outcome of the Panama conference was a marked advance over the rather frigid termination of the previous Congress at Lima. But there is a long journey still ahead before complete mutual understanding will have been reached. No two cultures seem more at variance than those of Latin America and of the United States. South of the Mexican border, people can comprehend the Englishman, Frenchman, German and Italian, for the reason that the European fits tightly into one of the categories the Latin American knows. But the *Norte Americano* seems to defy any such classification, and thus remains a partial enigma to his Southern neighbor. On the other hand, we are perplexed considerably, and at times resentfully, at the endless formality and external pomp, under the surface of which we find ourselves incapable of penetrating. Long-visioned patience and courtesy may yet win the day, but we will never succeed unless we understand and appreciate the deep religious motive that, unconsciously if you will, actuates the Latin American.

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PRODUCTION, according to the Presidential message to Congress, is back to the 1929 level. Nonetheless, there are still nine million or more unemployed. The obvious conclusion would seem to be that a smaller number of workers is today producing what a larger number of workers produced in 1929, and that despite a shorter working day in many industries. Are machines taking the place of men? The President thinks so, for he speaks of "the task of finding jobs faster than invention can take them away." H. W. Prentis, Jr., President of the National Association of Manufacturers, denies the President's implication. The problem in his mind is "rather one of putting inventions to work to create new industries and new jobs." "Manufacturing industry today, according to a recent survey, is employing more workers than it did in 1929. . . . Employment today is nearest normal in the most highly mechanized industries, and unemployment is most pronounced in the least mechanized occupations." There is probably truth in both viewpoints. Undoubtedly in the long run inventions do create more jobs than they take away; but with equal certainty every new invention does throw out of employment the men who were actually performing the work undertaken by this or that new invention. Mr. Prentis recognizes this when he says: "Technological advances not infrequently cause temporary dislocation of employment and individual hardship." Being more interested in the suffering of the individual here and now than in the future technological progress of the nation, most of us would applaud Mr. Prentis' further statement that, "the cushioning of unemployment against such shocks" is a major objective of industry.

ANOTHER disturbing feature of the same situation: many experts tell us that one of the reasons for the crash of 1929 was over-production. Yet here we are again up to the 1929 level with nine million still stamping the streets. If those nine million find employment, production will rise higher than what was considered too high a level in 1929. A crazy situation? Impossible of solution? We cannot admit that. Without the aid of experts we can see that there are thousands, even millions of families who could absorb more food, more clothing, more household labor-saving devices, more of life's necessities and life's luxuries—if they had the money. They certainly will not have the money for this extra and, in many cases, very necessary expenditure, if they remain unemployed, on relief, supported by the Government, which is to say by people who are working. And many of the people who are working could very well spend in further purchase the money they give to the Government in taxes to support the people who are not working. It seems stupidly platitudinous to say that the solution of the whole problem is the increase of the purchasing power of the millions now underpaid or unemployed. Perhaps it is a platitude, but the experts in the long run can tell us nothing better. The crux of the whole problem is the worker and the unemployed who should be a worker. And he will remain a crux in the real sense of the word, that is a cross, to himself, to industry, to the country at large, until Business gets together with Government, until Labor gets together with itself and with Business, and all three get together in a spirit compounded of determination, sincerity and mutual confidence.

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THAT theories of Professor Einstein on the physical universe should help to guide a modern philosopher out of the maze of philosophic idealism seems about as mysterious as is the Einsteinian doctrine of curved space. We take, however, the word of one such philosopher, Professor Evander Bradley McGilvary, who retired five years ago at the age of seventy at the University of Wisconsin, when he ascribed to Einstein's teachings his inspiration for a "perspective" theory of realism, as he propounded it at the recent meeting of the American Philosophical Association. Professor McGilvary, like many of his contemporaries, speaks in terms of sense perception about things which properly refer to the spirit. But his departure is clear and unmistakable from the current unwillingness to recognize the power of human knowledge, whether sensory or intellectual, to reach objects as they are in themselves. "With perspective realism," says McGilvary, "we have real things in consciousness. When I see a wall, it is not just an idea of the wall I have in mind. It is a real physical wall outside." His observation that "consciousness is a relation" sounds notably like the familiar *signum quo* of the scholastics; and Aristotle seems to speak again when McGilvary declares: "Every philosopher has the universe in the perspective of a philosophy."

DIVORCE COURTS ARE FOUL WITH FRAUD AND PERJURY

Then comes alimony, then a fight for the children

THOMAS P. CALLAGHAN

DIVORCE courts have degenerated into the worst ceremonial hypocrisy on the American scene. Any newspaper reporter, such as myself, who has watched the cheap farce of divorce court drama for more than a year will agree with the observation. Lawyers admit it. But they also admit that divorce cases are easy money for a few hours' preparation and a few minutes in court. Most judges admit divorce testimony is a mixture of perjury and distortion.

Yet, day after day, throughout the country, sacred marriage contracts are dissolved with a flimsy, speedy rigamarole which leaves even the uneducated with a feeling that ethereal ties have been cut by a sleazy, meretricious bargain-basement procedure.

In my State, where divorce laws are probably at least as stringent as the country's average, lawyers admit almost no one need go to Reno—except to avoid publicity. During the past year, in one of the State's largest divorce courts, only about one divorce in fifty has been refused. And many have been so flimsy that only the shadow of sham pervading the august courts has prevented their naked fraud from being exposed.

How do our present-day divorce courts operate? Let us survey the scene at ten in the morning on almost any week-day. The court is fairly well filled with principals and witnesses. Most of the tales are told by wives because it is not considered sporting for a husband to obtain a divorce except when no other course is open. Even when the wife is the only one at fault—if such a situation could exist—she obtains the divorce, and probably delivers a prompted monolog alleging that her husband hit her across the face and threw her new hat into the garbage pail.

About fifty persons are crowded into the spectator seats. A dozen or more lawyers are seated in the bar enclosure, talking over football games or politics waiting for the judge to appear. In contrast to the nervousness of the clients, the lawyers are not worrying about their cases. They know the mills of divorce grind easily.

Then the black-robed justice steps into the courtroom. After comfortably seating himself in his elevated position, the judge begins checking off the

docket to determine what cases are ready and what cases can be disposed of in a few moments' consultation at the bench. The clerk from his enclosure just below the judge's lofty throne reads off "Sockem against Sockem." Comes the answer from the lawyers: "Libellant ready" and "Libellee ready." On down the list the clerk goes receiving various answers, usually that the principals are ready. While the cases are being called, clients and witnesses sit more or less pop-eyed as the strange procedure of the powerful agency which is about to undo the words "until death do us part," is unfolded. The lawyers continue in whispered tones their conversations about politics and football.

When the decks have been cleared for action the usual contempt cases, of those who have failed to keep up their alimony or support payments, are started. Lawyers and principals assemble at the bench. A typical case would be a wife with two children who had been granted support payments of \$12 a week at the time of her divorce.

The judge checks over figures offered by both parties. More than once he has been known to say: "It's the same old question of trying to run two homes on a sum barely sufficient to run one. But these children must be taken care of. That is the father's obligation above everything else. He must pay \$8 every week for the present, even if he has to go without cigarettes and desserts. I continue the case for two months to determine whether he can pay more then."

About this point in the morning's proceedings in the daffy procedure of divorce, the persons in the spectator seats who have been contemplating the rosy paradise of single blessedness begin to wonder vaguely, subconsciously, if the slick paper magazines and the movies have not been kidding them about the glorious American tradition of divorce.

After a half-dozen or so of such contempt cases are heard, the divorces begin. The clerk calls the case. The lawyer for the libellant arises and motions for his client and her witnesses to step forward. Nervously, self-consciously they walk toward the general direction of the witness stand.

A court officer who has been half-dozing or chatting with a reporter steps from behind his desk

and motions the witnesses to stand a few paces in front of the witness stand. "Right here," he says brusquely. "Now face the court." The clerk catches them with his command; "Raise your right hand," just as they face properly. Bewildered, they raise their hands. "Do you severally solemnly swear that in the matter now in hearing you will tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?" The clerk turns away and places the papers before the judge.

"Sit here," says the court officer bluntly, shepherding the persons into the witness seats. "No, not you," he says to the libellant. "You take the stand."

Speed is the essential in divorce courts today, just as on a factory assembly line. No sooner has the libellant stepped to the stand than she hears her lawyer say: "What is your name?" Usually the witness has become so nervous because of the lack of solemnity, among other reasons, her first attempt to give her name is merely a pip squeak and the judge has to tell her to speak up. After giving her name and address, the witness says she is the wife of Mr. So-and-So. She then gives the date and place of her marriage. Some lawyers do not even bother to give the court a copy of the marriage certificate any more.

Then, in answer, to a form question to show the court has proper jurisdiction, the witness tells where she lived with her husband after the marriage. "Now," says the lawyer, "on or about January 1, 1939 did any incident occur between yourself and your husband?" The case has been well talked over with the lawyer: the witness knows what incident is meant. "Yes," she says. "I came home from work and started to get the supper. My husband sat down to read the paper. Just because I asked him to boil some water he threw a bunch of cooked spinach at me. Then after supper he slapped me across the face and knocked me to the floor."

About this time one reporter is saying to the other: "That's No. 183." The other scribe replies, "You're right, they always seem to get knocked down by every slap in the face."

This story of the wife is enough to get her a divorce these days on the popular grounds of cruel and abusive treatment. Of course, some other incidents are generally added but one "knockdown" is enough to form the basis of the case with most judges. Later on, in the corridor, the lawyer is apt to tell a reporter confidentially that the real reason behind the marital breakup was that the husband was going around with another woman.

This type of divorce case, in which the husband does not appear is called uncontested. In a contested case, where the husband is not willing to give his wife a divorce, he might take the stand and tell his version of the spinach-throwing. "I came home that night after I had finished my work in the factory. I put the potatoes on to boil before my wife arrived and sliced up some tomatoes. Then my wife came in, and I set the table and then started to read the paper. She wanted to have me heat some water for some turnips, and

I asked her why she couldn't do it herself. She called me a lazy bum and a lot of other things. I did throw some spinach but I didn't try to hit her. I was mad and threw the stuff in the sink because I don't like it. I did slap her after dinner, but she was calling me names. It was only a slap and didn't come close to knocking her down."

Anyone who has heard a contested divorce knows that the saying, "There are two sides to every story," should be inscribed on jade and hung in every home. However, contested divorces are very unfashionable at present. Apparently, it isn't considered cricket for a husband to throw dirt. Also, no one has the money to pay lawyers for a good old fashioned battle. Even judges are discouraging contested divorces. Only the other day one said to lawyers: "What do these people want to spread their troubles in the newspapers for? If they can't live together let one of them get the divorce. And tell them if they both have grounds for divorce neither can get it in a contested case."

After the wife has told her story in an uncontested case, a friend takes the stand and corroborates some essential details. Then another friend testifies he was present when the sheriff served the husband with the divorce libel. This is to show the husband had the opportunity to be present if he wished to do so. Sometimes, the last witness is not necessary because a lawyer is there to represent the husband on the question of alimony, or maintenance for children. A few years ago young wives without children were given alimony. Now such a thing is unheard of in most States—the economic depression apparently having changed the verdict on whatever moral justice is involved in the question.

A wife with two or more children is pretty sure to be awarded about half her husband's income in a divorce decree. But many wives have found out that if their former husband does not make a week's pay—or finds a convenient way to juggle bookkeeping—she is apt to be left out in the cold.

Nobody takes divorce cases very seriously these days. The bizarre stories of marital mixups have not half the dramatic force of a custody fight centered about some bewildered child whose parents hate each other but love him. In most custody cases, the genuine affection which each parent holds for the child is like an unblemished flower garden in a war devastated city.

At the time of divorce, a mother is almost always given custody, especially if the children are small. One judge has remarked more than once that he gave custody to a mother who was a prostitute. "Nothing on earth can take the place of a mother's love," he said. Oftentimes, fathers, more than a few are wealthy and righteous, think that their former wives are not caring for the children as they should. If the father attempts to gain custody, the children seldom hear the testimony. Judges, contrary to most opinion, do not ask such children which of their parents they prefer. "Each child wants to be with the parent he has seen most often—or the one who has given him the most candy," remarked a wise judge.

Although the children are generally spared the sight of their parents throwing mud at one another, they are often called to testify if they are beyond grammar school age. The tragedy of lost love and parental affection mirrored in their eyes is something to clutch at one's heart. Pawns in a game of hate, they have an early taste of disillusionment. In the summer for two weeks, during Christmas vacation, and at such other times as ordained by the court, the children try to obtain their full measure of fatherly friendship. In most cases the artificiality of the situation leads to heartache or disinterest.

But few mothers are thinking of future complexities when the judge signs her decree *nisi*. Her reverie of freedom is startled by the court officer calling out in a monotone: "John Doe, John Doe, come into court and answer to the libel of your wife Jane Doe, or your default will be recorded."

She stares at the officer as though hypnotized by his chant. "That's all," says the officer, motioning the unshackled wife and her friends out of the witness seats. More than one woman has thought as she walked out of the courtroom of the difference between her beautiful marriage ceremony permeated by the magic aura of love, and the tawdry divorce ceremony uplifted only by the black robe cloaking a former lawyer and the folklore of legal omnipotence.

PRIMER FOR VOTERS: NATIONAL COMMITTEE

BOXHOLDER



FOR nearly twenty years the phrase, "smoke-filled hotel room," has been a curse to hurl at politicians. The words have come to mean the uglier side of practical government in America. They suggest shirt-sleeved bosses sitting on the edge of a bed, red-faced and sweating with argument. They imply deals, fixing, secret agreements, little black satchels. Despite all this, the meeting of the Democratic National Committee, soon to be called to order, will almost certainly be held in a hotel room.

Let the reader put suspicion quickly out of mind. This is to be no secret, midnight gathering of a half-dozen bosses, chewing cigars and thinking of oil reserves. This will be an open, cheerful and sunlit assembly. Moreover, the Committee is large enough to require an auditorium for its discussions, and it will meet, probably, as it did last time, in a hotel ball room—or some dignified and air-cooled place designed to discourage plots and sweating—even by our leading realists in the art of government. Besides, there will be ladies present.

The Democratic group will meet in Washington

on February 5. The Republican Committee will convene there, too, on February 16.

Hence, on a bright Monday morning just three weeks from now, Mr. Farley will be making his way through the rows of gilded chairs in the Willard's ballroom. He will mount the small rostrum, tap lightly on the table with his pencil and call his co-workers to order. The sound of Chairman Farley's pencil will not, of course, be as momentous as the boom of the first gun at Sumter, but it will be just as arresting, for it will be a signal raising the curtain on the first act of our national comedy, staged every four years and always funnier than *Of Thee I Sing*.

This paper outlines the work of a national committee at the beginning of a Presidential election year. But it might be interesting to glance first at the personnel and organization of the present committees.

When the Democratic secretary begins to call the roll at next month's session, some of the best-known figures in our public life will answer. For instance, Committeeman E. D. Rivers, otherwise Governor of Georgia. Mr. Rivers made possible a series of the best news photos of the year when he forcefully ejected from office a highways commissioner who liked his job, and disliked Governor Rivers. Or E. H. Crump, the bespectacled Santa Claus from Tennessee—a man of such persuasive powers that he induced the Memphis voters to nominate for mayor somebody known to them only as Mr. Blank. Present also will be the potent Emma Guffey Miller, sister of the Pennsylvania Senator and enthusiastic New Dealer in her own right; E. J. Flynn, a gentleman whose ideas are heard with profound respect throughout the Bronx; Patrick A. Nash ditto throughout Chicago; Frank Hague, the Jersey man of influence.

Three seasoned Senators will answer the roll—Byrd, Ellender and Green; also the new and practically self-appointed Senator Chandler; an ex-Senator, McAdoo; and a man who would very much like to be Senator, Howard Bruce, of Maryland.

Among the nearly fifty committeewomen, Irish names will be in evidence.

Doubtless, with all this pleasant company, the gathering will see many smiles, much shaking of hands. But this does not mean a lack of under-surface tensions or antagonisms. The various White House hopefuls in the party are fairly well represented on the National Committee.

For instance, Frank McHale, the Indiana member, happens to be the genius behind the McNutt crusade. Texas member is John N. Garner, with his hip pocket already bulging with pledges. Mr. Crump will see that nothing is done in this meeting to bruise the blossoming chances of Cordell Hull, and Senator Byrd will prudently protect the Virginia boomlet for Senator Byrd.

A similar masking of personal interest for the sake of party harmony will mark the meeting of the Republicans. Doubtless, Representative Martin, the Massachusetts member, will make a speech,

carefully avoiding all mention of his own hopes for the lightning. The group may hear from New York's Kenneth Simpson, who favors both Dewey and Martin, and perhaps from Perry Howard, crusader in the Southland for Candidate Taft. Present and also vocal for harmony will be such counselors as Iowa's Spangler, Pennsylvania's Owlett, Virginia's Mrs. Boocock and other leaders well publicized by the nation's newspapers.

The Republican Party, as an organization, is made up of fifty-three main units—those, namely, in the forty-eight States, the District, and four American dependencies. The Democratic Party, because it gives an active voice to the Canal and Virgin Islands, has fifty-five chief units. Each unit has the right to two places on its national Committee, one for a man and one for a woman; and hence the Republican Committee has 106 places and the Democrats 110.

These members are nominated by the party voters or leaders of their own States, and then formally elected to a four-year term by vote of the party's National Convention. Thus, the incumbent Democrats were named in June, 1936, on the day following the choice of Mr. Roosevelt as candidate for a second term; while the Republicans were chosen two weeks earlier at Cleveland—in a session which listened to a prayer by Archbishop Schrembs, named the Committee, and then recessed—all in twenty minutes' time.

Theoretically the new national chairman is elected by the incoming committee; actually, as were both Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Farley, he is chosen by the Presidential nominee. His first job (in which, of course, he is strenuously helped by the Committee) is to employ every means, except possibly first-degree murder, to put his man in the White House. If he wins his campaign, he usually takes a Government job and resigns his chairmanship—although Mr. Farley has broken this fragile custom. If he meets defeat, he follows an old routine: he sends a warm congratulatory telegram to the victor and spends the next four years in publicly damning his works, his pomps, his callous breaking of platform promises.

The work of the two National Committees, as they meet in the beginning of an election year, follows a standardized routine. Both bodies observe practically the same order of business; and hence the following summary of what one Committee did four years ago will serve to outline the procedure to be followed by both next month.

The Democrats met on January 9, 1936. Their morning session was devoted chiefly to fervid speeches—all, according to their handbook, liberally punctured with laughter and applause. But the afternoon session was in order only a few minutes when Mr. McAdoo obtained the floor.

The gentleman spoke of his own "great, great and absolutely unequaled State of California," and then revealed that San Francisco was anxious to act as host to the coming convention. He praised

the climate, the hotels, the hospitality, the brave men and beautiful women of the Bay City; he pooh-poohed objections about its remoteness from other centers, and climaxed his plea by offering \$150,000 (a sum raised by local patriots) as a contribution to convention expenses.

The Hon. Pat Nash stood up. Chicago wanted the convention, said he, and he introduced five leading Loopers to urge the invitation. These advocates also discussed hotels, art museums, railroads. They tossed in a check equal to California's; they stressed the vote-winning powers of any convention held in the center of the agricultural States.

Philadelphia's turn came next. Mayor Wilson, fearful of his eloquence because he was a Republican addressing Democrats, emphasized his city's lack of rain. This point did not seem to stir his hearers much; yet the day was won for Philadelphia when a later salesman boosted the cash bid to \$200,000. After that, the vote for the Quaker City was unanimous.

As a second important step that afternoon, the Committee authorized its chairman to issue the call to a national convention. This was a letter (written later by Mr. Farley) to the fifty-five party organizations officially inviting them to choose delegates to Philadelphia on June 23 for the great and serious business of nominating a candidate for President and Vice President of the United States, and also of "promulgating" the platform.

Previously, the Committee had determined that under the party basis of representation, Alabama would have the right to send 22 delegates to the summer convention, Arizona 6, Arkansas 18, and so on down the list. It now authorized the Chairman to quote the rules for apportionment in his Call and to hold the State units to observance.

Next month, following the pattern drawn above, the two Committees will name the date and city for their convention and authorize the official Call. One important detail, however, will distinguish the two Calls. Among the Democrats, apportionment of delegates is easily determined and remains practically unchanged from convention to convention; whereas among the Republicans, a new distribution must be figured out and sanctioned in every Presidential election year.

Party differences in basis of representation will be dealt with in a succeeding paper.

Henry Mencken once said that Democrats love to gather in huge crowds and sweat on one another, and it is true that they seem always to pick the hottest city of the country and the sultriest week of the year for their convention.

Traditionally they convene after the Republicans, and this time the head of the party seems determined to hold this advantage. But the Republicans are envious of last place. They prefer to know who their target is before they begin to shoot at him, and indeed before they name their own chief gunner. As a result, the two National Committees are now playing Alphonse and Gaston in front of a calendar.

BULGARIA IS POOR AND VERY RESTLESS

ARNOLD LUNN

THE technique of Communism is adapted with great ingenuity to the different environments in which the Communist works. It is not the philosophy (Dialectical Materialism) nor the economics (Labor Theory of Value) which converts men to Marxism, but empty stomachs and resentment. Communism, though in theory international, is always ready to associate itself with national grievances in accordance with its established principle of obtaining recognition as the most resolute of those who are fighting to redress an injustice.

Thus, in Bulgaria, the Communists exploit the legitimate grievance of the Bulgarians in the interests of Russia. Rumania, which fought neither in the first nor in the second of the Balkan wars, waited until Bulgaria had been crushed by her former allies, and then annexed the Dobrudja. If Soviet Russia were to invade Rumania, Bulgaria would almost certainly join Russia in a joint war against the Rumanians. All attempts to create a Balkan Entente have foundered on the refusal of Bulgaria to accept her present frontiers as final.

The Communist, of course, finds a potent ally in Pan-Slav mysticism. Russia is still the Big Brother, ever ready to rescue the little Slavs from their oppressors.

But the main asset of Communist propaganda is poverty. Bulgaria is a poor country, and modern developments in the art of war are making it increasingly difficult for small countries to compete, in war as in peace, with their big neighbors.

Bulgaria is a country with an eighty-per-cent peasant population. It is attempting to support not only a Government in Sofia, legations and consulates in foreign countries, but also to furnish fighting forces provided with the most modern and expensive of airplanes, anti-aircraft guns, tanks and even submarines. The small national unit like the small man in business is finding it increasingly difficult to compete against big business.

I take these figures from *Mir* for January 17, 1939, and have converted them into dollars at the rate of exchange then prevailing. Three quarters of the state and municipal employees received salaries ranging from one hundred to three hundred dollars a year. Less than three per cent received as much as four hundred dollars a year. Now, of course, the Bulgar can make his *leva* go much further than an English or American resident in Sofia, but even if we multiply these figures by two or three the result is still disconcerting.

The competition for these underpaid posts is immense, for the Bulgarian has the mentality satirized by Gogol. Most peasants are prepared to scrape together every penny they can save in order

to give their sons a university education and thus to qualify them for a Government position and a pension. The result is that most of these graduates are worse off than their peasant fathers. The academic proletariat for whom there are no available positions form a receptive audience for revolutionary propaganda.

What of the peasants? Most of them are very poor. Few peasants turn over more than a hundred dollars a year in actual cash. They pay their taxes with reluctance and indeed only pay the old Turkish taxes which are still in force. The Turks are realists. They did not pester peasants with paper forms, but came along, counted his sheep and goats, and charged him so much per head.

This peasant population has to support the officials at Sofia, the foreign ministers and fighting forces. The peasant is, therefore, usually in arrears with his taxes. Recently the Government waived fifty per cent of the arrears due. A local cartoonist represented the Bulgarian peasant reading this good news with a perplexed expression: "That's all right but what I want to know is, who is going to pay the remaining fifty per cent?"

One of the leading citizens of Sofia, to whom I brought an introduction from a mutual friend, illustrated the attitude of the peasant by the following illuminating story. He himself was born in the Baltic Provinces and his Bulgarian is still far from perfect. In the course of a country ramble he met a group of relatively well-to-do peasants.

"We see by your speech," one of them said, "that you are a Russian. Do please tell us how things are at Moscow?"

"Some things go well," replied my friend, "other things less well."

"But you must not be afraid," the peasants said, "you are among friends. You can talk quite freely. We are all Communists here."

My friend was interested to discover what exactly they understood by Communism. "When Communism comes to Bulgaria," they answered, "we will go to Sofia and hang all the ministers after which there will be a great peace in the land."

Small holdings are not necessarily a cure for Communism. It depends how small the holdings are. My informant added that in free elections the Communists would return seventy per cent of the Chamber. I often wonder what is the answer of a sincere democrat to those who are using the democratic machinery to destroy democracy. The answer of Bulgaria is a parliamentary dictatorship, a queer hybrid which works reasonably well, perhaps because the King is known sincerely to desire a gradual elimination of the powers which he has been forced to assume.

My friend from the Baltic States remarked that there is not a great difference in principle between the outlook of Russian or German or Bulgarian Governments. The age of liberalism properly so-called is disappearing. Anglo-Saxon democracy slowly evolved a careful system of checks on the arbitrary authority of the state, but today all respect for the individual as such and for his rights is disappearing in Russia, Germany and elsewhere.

OUR FIRST CONSUL TO THE PAPAL COURT

THOMAS F. MEEHAN

INTEREST in the proposed cooperation of President Roosevelt and the Pope in promoting the ending of the war abroad and for peace among the contending nations, makes pertinent the fact that the first formal contact between the Government of the United States and the Papal States was brought about in 1797 through the enterprise of an astute Italian, Giovanni Battista Sartori, a member of a well-to-do merchant family.

On March 14 of that year, he wrote from Rome to his friend here, the famous patriot of the Revolution, Robert Morris, suggesting that he ought to draw the attention of Congress to the fact of the considerable and increasing trade between the United States and Italy, and that, although many other nations had representatives at Rome to take care of their interests, we had nobody for such a duty, naively adding:

Should you think proper to inform the Congress about it, and should you find the Gentlemen disposed for this affair I offer my best Service for this appointment in any place they would think proper. Only I must let you observe that Rome is the principal place of Italy, and where resides every Minister or Agent for the other nations. I shall undertake this employment with great satisfaction entirely for the honor of being employed in the Americans affairs as the Country I love—the country I have refused for mine and the Country where an Individual of her make part of myself. As who I am, and what my family is you please to enquire to John Adams, Esq. as the Senator of Rome has particular wrote to him about it.

He got the job; his commission, as Consul of the United States, at Rome, being dated, by the State Department, June 26, 1797.

After holding this office in Rome for three years he seems to have concluded that there was much more scope for his abilities on this side of the Atlantic. So, without any official permission he handed over the office of Consul to his brother, Vincent, came over to Philadelphia in April, 1800, and settled down there as a merchant.

New York, now predominantly Catholic, had the honor of first officially recognizing the Pope's flag in this country, when, as a colony, on September 24, 1757, its Court of Vice-Admiralty, Judge Lewis Morris presiding, recognized the independent neutral status of the Papal States, as well as the protection of the Papal flag and the Pope's pass. It was in the case of the ship *The Immaculate Conception and St. Ignatius Loyola*, seized in West Indian waters and brought to New York by two British privateers. The Court released the ship on the captain's plea and gave him damages against the privateers of about \$5,000.

Sartori must have met William Seton, Mother Seton's husband, in Italy, for, during a visit to Philadelphia, Seton wrote to her on July 26, 1794:

I dined yesterday with my friend Sartori. His wife is a most agreeable little woman, and I was highly gratified at the many compliments passed on my *cara sposa*. Mrs. S. declares she must see you and I have invited them to pass some days with us before they go to Italy which will be in the month of September. I am sure you will be much pleased with her. I showed my friends your portrait, and many agreeable things were said, for which I felt highly flattered, but let them know that the artist, although a Frenchman, had not at all flattered you.

Sartori moved from Philadelphia to Trenton, N. J., where he built a fine residence and became locally important. He was one of the founders of the first Catholic parish there; set up the first mill for making macaroni pastes in this country, and a calico printing mill. He returned to Italy in 1832, and died, in his eighty-ninth year, at Leghorn, in 1853. He had fourteen children. One of his sons was Commodore Louis C. Sartori of the United States Navy. A grandson, Monsignor Luigi Sartori, was for a number of years a priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and then retired and went to live in Italy where he died in 1926. Writing from there to the *Baltimore Catholic Review*, in 1924 he said: "Today I am probably the only living man (I soon will be eighty-two years old) who can say he dined in 1873 with Madame Elizabeth Patterson (Bonaparte) a contemporary of Napoleon I, Jerome Bonaparte and the illustrious John Carroll."

His last surviving grandchild, Frank A. Sartori, died at Philadelphia, in October, 1934, leaving a number of family papers and documents, affording interesting details of Sartori's career, and many have been transcribed by kind courtesy of the family, for the *Records and Studies* of the United States Catholic Historical Society. Among them is his commission as Consul General of the Pope in the United States, signed, December 28, 1828, by the Camerlengo Cardinal Galletti.

After he settled down in business in Philadelphia and Trenton complaints kept coming from Rome to Washington about his continued absence from his post at the Consulate there, which, as is noted above, he had without warrant left in charge of his brother. The State Department, therefore, removed him and, on March 3, 1823, appointed Felix Cicognani as his successor. Pius VIII was then Pope, and the similarity of the name of the second United States Consul with that of the present Apostolic Delegate at Washington is interesting.

During his early years in Trenton, Sartori seems, without the official status from the Pope that came to him in 1828, and in spite of the incongruity of such a situation, to have assumed to be the Consul of the United States to the Pope, and Consul of the Pope to the United States at one and the same time. But this little tangle was straightened out by the subsequent official adjustments. He was all during his career, an estimable character. Mass was said in his house in Trenton and the visiting priests stayed there from 1806 to 1813 when St. John's, the first church in the town, was built.

PORTUGAL SHOWS THE WAY TOWARD A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

Salazar builds a state from and for the people

EILEEN EGAN

THE enormously progressive corporative Republic of Portugal has at last come to the attention of Left-wing liberals and Communists in America and England. One such observer from the English *New Statesman and Nation* could not deny the swift and tangible benefits to the worker, the incredible improvement in general prosperity and morale, and concluded: "Short of a fundamental change in the social structure, the Government has done much for the country, and certainly more than the old rotativist parliamentarians had done."

The only "fundamental change in the social structure" of a nation would be what Earl Browder terms a "quick transition," or, in our terminology, a revolution. Looked at in this light, the foregoing statement is praise indeed from a liberal. Other men of the same persuasion have realized the peril to their pink program if the amazing results of the corporative system of government were noised abroad. They have, therefore, taken refuge in the old theory that the best defense is an offense, and have begun to attack the corporative ideal with the most damning word in the modern vocabulary, "Fascist."

The outward organization of workers into unions and employers into associations, and the formation of *corporations* by representatives of both groups bears some similarity to Italy's system of corporations. The irreconcilable differences, however, are never pointed by those who label everything they happen to fear or dislike as "Fascist." Italy is led by a Fascist party. There is no such leading party in Portugal, but rather a coalition of old parties for the good of the nation. Monarchists join with republicans to create a better state. The Italian organizations were decreed by the high command long after the Fascist party came into power, and therefore have a political as well as social character. In Portugal all such organizations are of constitutional authorization and bow to the interests of no faction. They are not forced, but have grown naturally in each community.

During the first two decades of this century thinking Portuguese surveyed the chaos of their country. They looked backward to the time when Portugal was at its zenith, and decided that they needed "to restore Portugal to the purity of the

institutions which formed its glory, and which proceeded in a direction consonant with its social and political genius." These words of Fernão da Vida refer to the guilds and associations which lasted in very real form in Portugal to the middle of the eighteenth century. To convert men to these principles by words, not by the commoner method of the bomb, a newspaper *Monarquia* was founded. As far back as 1914 a definite movement of students and intellectuals were using the newspaper and other avenues of expression to gain a following. Later on, the *Nação Portuguesa* (Portuguese Nation), a review, gave more impressive voice to the ideas of this group.

Through national tradition and through the peaceful power of the press, more and more Portuguese became aware of the possibilities of a nation organized into guildlike unions of workers' and employers' associations. Since the nation was then ruled by an oligarchy representing a small but powerful minority, most of the students and intellectuals saw this reorganization of the state as being possible only under a restored monarchy.

A great number of books rose out of the movement, many of them suggesting real remedies for the deplorable plight of the common man. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says of this period: "The subsequent political history of Portugal (i.e. after the revolution of 1910) is a record of short-lived ministries and of revolutionary outbreaks. The effects of the revolution fell most heavily on the poor of the country districts and emigration increased to an unprecedented extent."

José Pequito Rebelo published *New Methods of Tillage* and *The Primer of the Landworker*. Antonio Sardinha, poet and historian, was probably the most important thinker of the group. One of his most strongly held theses, however, was unpopular with most Portuguese. He proposed in *Aliança Peninsular* an Iberian union. His thesis was based on the history of the two countries. He maintained with cogent arguments that if Spain and Portugal had in earlier times made a common front against a hostile Europe instead of fighting one another on narrow nationalistic grounds, they would have remained a power to be reckoned with in continental affairs.

Much of the most constructive effort of the group found its way into the *Nação Portuguesa*. It might be well to resurrect some of the thoughts thus buried in old magazine files and not available to American readers, in order to stress the point that Portuguese corporativism was born of the mind not of the military, and that it antedated the rise of Fascism by many years. Antonio Sardinha stated in 1921 in a leading article the aims of himself and of his followers; "to re-portugalize Portugal," and to restore a monarchical system which,

... appeals for a syndicalization of interests and professions as the sole effective guarantee of liberty, but of liberty that is organic, the sister of competency, of hierarchy and of authority. ... Exactly because we are the defenders of intelligence, we are not partisans of economic individualism, generator of contemporaneous plutocracy.

Of nationalism he says:

Nationalism is above all a soul, a spiritual strength, a genius which, integrated, will lift the people to participate in the progress of the world to the civilizing function of which they are capable.

In distress at his country's fate, he turns to the *Lusiad*, the great national poem of Luis de Camoes:

We open the *Lusiad*, fount of intimate consolation, breviary of hope, in which passes the same mysterious presence which we were brought to meet in the verses of the *Imitation*. ... He (Camoës) answers in some manner the inquietude which we feel in the blood, driven on by some power of "knowing-it-all." We open the *Lusiad* and perceive there, as in no other poet, an apostolic vocation which animates as in a mystic salve the moral body of a fatherland well loved.

Cesar D'Oliveira in *Two Centuries of Penance* attributes the downfall of his country to the fall of the guild system. The older system was killed, he says, by the hostility of the new merchant class, and by the introduction of ideas of government alien to Portugal:

It was from France principally that the strong wind of demolition blew which dismantled and perverted our traditional institutions ... the fatality of gold reduced completely to the shade of useless things the associations of Arts and Professions which in Portugal existed until the middle of the eighteenth century. To them the nation owes its marvelous unity of thought and that admirable creative power.

Perhaps because they were exalted by persecution, these writers often return to the vocation which their little country seemed to possess in the past and which they feel it destined to assume again in the future. In Fernão da Vida's *Restoration of Portugal by a Renewal of the Monarchy* we read:

Perhaps a secret voice tells us that to Portugal the Lord resolves in the passion and death which it is now suffering, a most sacred mission to restore abjured Christianity. ... If Portugal saved Europe from the wave of Islam, why not believe in the miracle to come, in the miracle of which our active misery is the price we have to pay in the profound designs of God.

In the *New Order*, Sardinha finishes:

Perhaps to Portugal will be reserved the glorious destiny of inaugurating the new order in Europe. If it will be, and I believe that it will be, we will have recovered our apostolic vocation of a conquering and discovering people, raising against the whirlwind

of the East, the most essentially Christian example of the Western world.

This writer constantly calls the state to its duty of upholding the dignity of the working man, and cries out against the deplorable injuries to that dignity committed by some modern governments:

Under the dictatorship of Lenin we witnessed the advent of a tyranny without name which prostitutes the dignity of work, reducing it to the vile task of a beast pulling a cart. In the words of George Valois we answer: "Man, why workest thou?" "I work because I am the instrument of the will of God, who commanded me to put into divine service all the faculties and all the graces which I received from the Lord in *usufructu*."

This spirit informs the Portuguese Government today. In 1926, a national rising of all political shades of opinion drove out the corrupt oligarchy that called itself a government. Basing their work on the thought and experience of their country's past achievement, the new leaders have slowly nurtured the solid substructure of the corporative system with the magnificent results outlined above. Thus the best in the teachings of Sardinha, Rebelo, da Vida, D'Oliveira and their group have at last borne fruit.

These leaders seem to be succeeding in their attempt to bend capitalism to the happiness and good of the individual man, and to create for him more than a modicum of material security. Everyone knows that the governments of today must meet the challenge made pressing by the abuses of capitalism; that of providing some definite security for the worker.

Another challenge which would be met much more quickly if the true nature of man were taken into account is that of preventing men in increasing numbers from being tied to work not worthy of a human being. Portugal has come to grips with these challenges with different methods from those that would be used by the liberals of the United States and England. Because these methods recall superficially some aspects of Italy's experiment, the liberals, tossing aside Portugal's constitutional rule, its partyless Government, its loyalty to its own traditions, and its regeneration from chaos, may try to dispose of it with the dread word "Fascist."

In view of Portugal's history, as we have seen, this would be a complete reversal of facts. This little country which in the early capitalistic period commanded almost all the gold in the world through its colonies, could have become the greatest capitalistic power in the world. Its emphasis, however, was on other things than profit, and the gold flowed into more grasping hands. The first commandment of the new government says simply: "The New State is the coordination and synthesis of whatever is *lasting* in the genuine traditions of the nation, and whatever is *new* in its most advanced ideals."

This tells us that the emphasis of the Portuguese Government is back where it anchored itself in its glorious past, where missionary and discoverer sailed new seas together, on the welfare of the spirit and body of man.

CHRONICLE

CONGRESS. The House passed, 251 to 132, the Gavagan Anti-Lynching Bill, sent it to the Senate. During 1939 there were three lynchings. . . . A House-approved bill to deport promptly "aliens engaged in espionage and sabotage, alien criminals and other undesirable aliens," was passed by the Senate. . . . Following the disclosure that the State Department had informed the League of Nations the United States was extending Finland tangible sympathy through direct consultations, the American Red Cross and private agencies, proposals were introduced into the Senate and House to loan the Finns money, to give them the Army's new semi-automatic Garand rifles (costing \$300 each) at one dollar each, and ammunition at cost. Loans from a neutral to a belligerent would be contrary to the Constitution and to international law, Senator Wiley declared. . . . When Chairman Sabath of the House Rules Committee left the White House following a conference with the President, he was quoted as saying that continuation of the Dies Committee "would be a waste of money . . . I think President Roosevelt is not anxious for quick action." . . . Senator Harrison's resolution to create a joint Congressional committee to study President Roosevelt's estimated 1941 budget, the largest in peace-time history, and to coordinate the revenue producing and appropriating committees of Congress was passed by the Senate. . . . Referring to the bill for another huge expansion in the United States Navy, Senator Walsh asked why "there should be any further authorization for the expansion of the navy before we expend what we have already authorized . . . the budget for next year asks for only a small percentage of the \$1,200,000,000 that has already been authorized." Counseling against "tremendous appropriations" for defense "to fight nobody," Senator Adams asserted when there is too powerful a navy there is "a temptation to use it."

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WASHINGTON. In what was regarded as a measure to strengthen Scandinavia in the face of Russian expansion, the Government, through the RFC and the Export-Import Bank, extended credits of \$10,000,000 to Norway. . . . In reply to questions concerning Britain's embargo on German exports to the United States and other neutrals, London replied that Americans may ask for exemptions but that such "exemptions will only be given in very exceptional circumstances." The State Department asserted the reply to its questionnaire did not constitute an answer to its protest of December 8, 1939, against the British embargo. . . . Allotment of tin-plate scrap for export to Japan was cut almost in two by the State Department. . . . James V. Bennett, director of the Bureau of Prisons, re-

porting on Federal prisons, stated: "The average daily prison population for the fiscal year, 1939, was about ten per cent higher than during the previous year. The growth in number of Federal prisoners has been almost continuous since 1924, and the average population for 1939 was 57.3 per cent higher than the average for 1930." A long-range program for building more prisons was imperative, he intimated. . . . Supplementing its list of December 14, 1939, the State Department disclosed that thirteen more American ships have been detained by the British and French. . . . Following the report of James M. Landis, whom she had appointed trial examiner in the Bridges' deportation hearings, Secretary Perkins canceled the warrant of arrest against Harry Bridges. . . . With the appointment of Ministers, Australia and the United States commenced diplomatic relations. . . . Sale of two American ships to Holland and Canadian corporations was approved by the Maritime Commission. . . . Negotiations for a reciprocal trade treaty between the United States and Argentina were abandoned. Concessions to Argentina at a time when Congress was questioning the Executive trade-treaty powers were considered inopportune.

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THE ADMINISTRATION. Following their protests against his appointment of a personal representative to the Vatican, President Roosevelt conferred with Baptist, Lutheran and Seventh Day Adventist leaders at the White House, assured them no one church would receive greater recognition than another. After discussing his peace objectives with them, the President pledged them to secrecy in the matter. At his press conference, following his meeting with the Protestant leaders, Mr. Roosevelt stated there was no more significance in his appointment of a personal representative to the Vatican than there was in his mobilization of Protestant and Jewish leaders. He emphasized that his representative, Myron C. Taylor, will not hurry to Italy but will vacation in Florida before sailing, and that, upon arriving in Italy, Mr. Taylor will spend most of his time in Florence and will not go to the Vatican except when it is necessary to deliver a message. . . . At the \$100-a-plate Jackson Day dinner in Washington, to which Republican leaders declined invitations, President Roosevelt made no disclosure of his attitude toward a third term. He warned the Democrats present they would have to hold the independent vote to win this year, and hinted he had been successful in holding it. At a Jackson Day dinner in Cleveland, Robert H. Jackson, recently appointed by Mr. Roosevelt to the Attorney-Generalship, pleaded with the President to postpone any decision to vacate the White House until the international situation and certain domes-

tic problems had assumed more recognizable form, and asserted the Republicans were sure of "17,000,000 votes—at least a couple of million more than any Democrat ever got—except Roosevelt." . . . In Des Moines, Secretary Wallace urged Roosevelt for another term. . . . The American merchant ship *Mormacsun*, traveling outside the combat zone from the United States to Norway, was stopped by the British, taken into the war area for examination, despite the American Neutrality law forbidding ships to enter this area. Following the British seizure, the State Department revealed it had addressed a note to Britain on December 14, reserving American rights and intimating that such diversion of American vessels would be done "without regard to the law of the United States." The note urged Britain to manifest "a corresponding degree of accommodation" to the spirit of cooperation shown by American shipping, and thus "avoid giving rise to any occasion for the forcible diversion of American vessels to ports" forbidden to them by American law. The British action indicated the State Department's note had not changed the London attitude.

AT HOME. The Holy See named Most Reverend Christian H. Winkelman as Bishop of Wichita, Kan., Monsignor Sidney Metzger as auxiliary to the Archbishop of Santa Fe. . . . In a National Labor Relations Board election in the Johnson City, N. Y., plant of the Endicott-Johnson Corporation, which shares profits with employees, 1,612 workers voted for the A. F. of L., 1,079 for the C.I.O., 12,693 rejected affiliation with any labor union. . . . Reversing the Labor Board, the Federal Circuit Court in Chicago decreed that an employer is not obliged to put his agreement with a union in writing. . . . The Labor Board first ruled the American Radiator Company of Litchfield, Ill., had not locked out its employees, then ruled it had, and one of its attorneys, Jack Davis, who said he was "working for the C.I.O.," told some of the workers they should swear it was a lockout, according to testimony presented to the House Committee investigating the Board. Recommended by Jerome Frank was a Board attorney "with a liberal point of view (I should say turned left)" according to a memorandum of Francis Biddle, former Board chairman.

GREAT BRITAIN. Prime Minister Chamberlain removed Leslie Hore-Belisha as Secretary of State for War, offered him the Presidency of the Board of Trade. Declining this post, Mr. Hore-Belisha stepped out of the Cabinet. Oliver Stanley, son of the Earl of Derby, became War Secretary, and Lord Macmillan was replaced as head of the Ministry of Information by Sir John Reith. . . . All British Air Force units in France were combined under one commander, Air Marshal A. S. Barratt. . . . In a speech broadcast around the world, Prime Minister Chamberlain, referring to the "unholy pact Germany made with Russia," declared Britain's aid to Finland will "be no mere formality." Asserting he

did not think France and Britain would want to give up their close association when the war is over, Mr. Chamberlain said it might "develop into something wider and deeper" and that the Anglo-French collaboration in finance and economics might be extended "to other nations in Europe and, indeed, perhaps to the whole world." The British people must expect much grimmer war experiences than they have yet faced, he warned. Denying that the Allies desire the annihilation of the German people, the Prime Minister said: "On the other hand, the German people must realize that the responsibility for the prolongation of this war . . . is theirs as well as that of the tyrants who stand over them."

WAR. Off the east coast of Scotland, German air raiders bombed merchant ships, sank two, disabled a third. In the North Sea and English Channel, mines sank three additional vessels. . . . British flyers attacked German air bases on the North Sea Island of Sylt and Helgoland Bight. . . . In the Finnish-Russian war, a Helsinki communique declared that a repetition of the Finnish guerrilla tactics which had destroyed the Russian 163rd Division had succeeded in defeating the Soviet 44th Division in the Suomussalmi sector. The Finnish report said the Russian force had been in the main destroyed and that large supplies of war material had been captured. The Russian communique asserted the "Soviet troops withdrew several kilometers east of Suomussalmi." . . . The Bolshevik airmen continued their raids on Finnish cities. . . . The Soviet forces registered no gains in the Karelian Isthmus or in the Salla sector.

FOOTNOTES. A three-year trade and navigation treaty was concluded between Russia and Bulgaria. . . . Japan delivered to Russia the final installment owed by Manchukuo on purchase of the Chinese Eastern Railway, formerly owned by Russia. Mikhail M. Kaganovitch, Commissar of the Soviet aviation industry, was relieved of his post. . . . In Venice, Count Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister and Count Stephen Csaky, Hungarian Foreign Minister, discussed the matter of mutual support by their countries. King Carol of Rumania said his people "will die together to defend their borders." . . . An economic and financial agreement was signed in Paris between Britain, France and Turkey. . . . In Berlin, Field Marshal Goering was placed in charge of directing the war economy. . . . Sweden requested Moscow to investigate the shelling of a Swedish ship by a Soviet submarine. . . . Fighting between Chinese armies of Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communists' Eight Route Army, forces supposed to be cooperating against Japan, subsided. The Chinese Communists control and administer a special area in Shensi, Ningsia and Kansu. Their attempts to expand this special area further westward in Kansu caused the clashes. . . . War material left in Spain by the Italians was sent by Generalissimo Franco to Finland.

THE LABOR RACKETEER

IN one of his syndicated columns, that pungent paragrapher, Westbrook Pegler, recently paid his respects to President Green, of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Pegler may occasionally obscure the truth by tartness, but it seems to us that on this occasion, at least, his remarks are justified. Possibly we agree more readily with the Peglerian criticism because it is precisely what this Review has been offering for years.

That the A. F. of L. seems unable to act when a racketeer takes over a union, has long been a source of deep concern to all friends of organized labor. Many years ago, we drew President Green's attention to some particularly scandalous instances of racketeering in New York. Mr. Green replied with conventional regrets and the statement that, under the constitution of the A. F. of L., he was unable to intervene in a local quarrel. When it was pointed out that, since the constitution was not of its nature immutable, it might conceivably be amended to give the central body authority to cast out these criminals, President Green answered the suggestion by declining with some heat to have any further correspondence with us.

Subsequently the district attorney acted, and some of the racketeers were transferred to Sing Sing. Whether they again took over the unions on their release from prison, we are unable to say. Not improbably they did. Only a few weeks ago, a racketeer with the smell of prison still about him, just failed of election as president of an A. F. of L. union, and actually succeeded in being chosen as a member of the executive board. This worthy, who had never been an actual worker, had been convicted of the repulsive crime of extorting funds from the members of the union, and using them for his own purposes.

When unions put up with officials of this kind, with no interference from the central body, racketeering will appeal to every rascal who can worm his way into a labor organization, as a safe and lucrative business. But as long as these abuses continue, all organized labor is in danger of forfeiting the support of the public, and of inviting oppressive retaliatory legislation.

As Pegler writes, the president of the A. F. of L. "has imposed too long and too heavily on the fake plea that the autonomous rights of the component unions of the A. F. of L. prevent the national leadership from interfering." The plea is not a "fake," however, since it rests upon the constitution of the A. F. of L. To that extent, President Green is right, but we deeply regret that neither he nor any of his subordinates seems to think that the constitution should be amended.

The labor leader who lacks brains and conscience, or both, is at least as much of a menace to the rights of organized labor as the tyrannical employer. The A. F. of L. can retain its constitution, if it wishes, without change of jot or tittle. But if it does, it will encourage union racketeering wherever A. F. of L. unions are found.

EDITOR

TURNED LEFT

SOME trial examiners, appointed by the National Labor Relations Board, were open advocates of the C.I.O. Although they were commissioned to examine controversies involving the C.I.O., their appointment was understandable, since a judicial temper has never been valued at these inquisitions. But when Jerome Frank, of the S.E.C., recommended an appointment to the Board on the ground that the applicant was a "liberal, or, I should say, turned left," he showed that he knew what type of employee the Labor Board favored. But does the country want the "turned left" type?

THIS FATE

THE most important election since 1860 is set for next November. Millions are still unemployed, "tramping the streets, looking in vain for work," as President Roosevelt said in 1932. The national deficit continues to mount, and our debt at this moment approaches, perhaps has passed, the limit set by Congress. Congress will probably be compelled to increase old tax-rates, and to find new fields for taxation. The happy visions which in 1933 showed us a country in which every man who wanted work, could find it, have faded. Fear and unrest have taken their place.

That is the domestic situation. If our thoughts turn to arms and violence, on our northern border we have a country that is at war. Our "good neighbor" to the south has announced a still more vigorous campaign to make Mexico another Stalinized Russia.

The times are critical. They call for leaders who can forget partisan issues, and work solely for the welfare of this country. We are now testing, as Lincoln said at Gettysburg, "whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."

We pray that it may long endure. It has been a source of blessings for our people. Under our constitutional government, the oppressed of all countries have found in the United States a haven of refuge. For a century and a half civil and religious liberty has been protected by the temper of the American people, as well as by constitutional provisions. These blessings, be it remembered, have existed in no other country.

SOAP

IN his address at the Jackson Day dinner, the President congratulated the Administration on having kept "millions of Americans out of the bread-line." True, but these millions have not been provided with jobs; they have merely been transferred to a disguised Federal bread-line. It is disquieting to think that after seven years of economic reform by Federal statute, the necessity for a bread-line still exists. We cannot afford to conduct the Government on the theory that we can gain our daily bread by taking in one another's washing. Who will pay for the soap?

FATEFUL YEAR

But all human institutions are subject to change. Franklin warned us that our constitutional government would not endure, unless we understood what it was, and were eager to support it. If it is to remain a government of and by the people, the people must govern through the representatives whom they themselves have duly elected.

It is not to be supposed, however, that every political malady can be cured by legislation, or that through laws alone a nation is made prosperous. It is easy to set too high a value on statutory enactment. At one extreme, we find the *laissez faire* ideal of government, and at the other, an ideal that paralyzes private initiative by making the citizen a pawn of the state. We are swinging to this second extreme, and as we swing dizzily we are blinded to the truth that too much legislation, or ill-conceived legislation, usually increases the evil against which it is directed. Today the "liberal" is the man whose theories, brought to their logical conclusion, would bind all private enterprise with the chains of the law, and turn the citizen into a subject.

Some bonds, of course, must be forged by the state. But it is incumbent upon us to choose as our representatives in the Federal and State Governments men who do not think that their first duty is to shackle the individual to the car of the civil power. Unless we use our vote intelligently and conscientiously, the chain-makers will triumph. In that case, this nation cannot long endure.

WHEN the Dies Committee filed its report, did its distinguished chairman, in the language of the prize ring, "pull his punches"? There is ground for the question, for in his speech at Beaumont, Texas, on January 6, Mr. Dies referred to subversive societies still at work. It is not to be supposed that these anti-social groups will go out of existence simply because the Dies Committee, working against heavy odds, managed to expose them. They will simply assume other names, and their past experiences will teach them to carry on their destructive policies with greater effectiveness.

For the moment, Communists and their movement have few friends. Fellow travelers who once boasted their Communistic affiliations with a sense of splendid guilt, are silent today, for they realize that they have been duped. Some are habitual "joiners," and probably can be duped again. But most of them have learned a lesson.

But if dozens of stupid yet dangerous organizations are beginning to pine, not the least reason for this welcome change is the work of the Dies Committee. It seemed to us from the outset that this Committee would perform a needed function, and while it made some mistakes, on the whole it has done excellent work. For some reason, as yet unexplained, the Committee was never able to secure the cooperation of the Administration. But the attitude of the officials at Washington was not simply indifference. For the Committee had hardly begun its work when official disapprobation was observed, and it was wholly unable to secure the aid from the various bureaus and Departments which was accorded the La Follette Committee, for instance, and which for years has been given without hesitation to committees of the Senate and House.

On several occasions, the President referred to the Committee in terms of disparagement or condemnation. His example has been followed not only by Mrs. Roosevelt, but by Secretary Ickes, and dozens of minor officials. In addition, the Committee was hampered by one or two members who seemed to think it incumbent upon them to provide a special mantle of protection for witnesses summoned by subpoena.

The Committee has shown beyond reasonable doubt that agitators, some of them Nazis, most of them Reds, had created conditions which, in the absence of evidence, most Americans would have thought incredible. Even more serious than their efforts to control labor unions was their largely successful plan to place men and women in key-positions in various bureaus and Departments at Washington. It is bad enough when unions can be induced to adopt the "sit-down" and the "slow-down" strike, and to indulge in sabotage. But far more dangerous is it when a party whose aim is to destroy our constitutional form of government can put its agents in the Government itself.

That these schemes have been checked, at least in part, is due wholly to the Dies Committee, and in no sense to the Department of Justice. Is it too

much to hope that the Department will use the evidence secured by Mr. Dies to deal suitably in the courts with disloyal Americans who have been guilty of subversive practices, and to deport the aliens who employed these men and women as tools?

UNION OR PROFIT SHARING?

THREE years ago, by a vote of 450 to four, the employees of the Duffy Silk Company in Buffalo adopted a plan for profit-sharing and collective bargaining. The plan was approved by the Rev. John P. Boland, then regional director of the National Labor Board, now Chairman of the New York State Labor Board, and by two conciliators of the Federal Department of Labor. Under this plan the workers agreed to refrain from joining a union, and all went well until December 15, 1938 when a union of textile workers, affiliated with the C.I.O., complained to the National Labor Relations Board that the plan really established a company union, and hence constituted an unfair labor practice.

This contention has been sustained by the Labor Board, but with a distinction which, it seems to us, destroys the plan. The Board does not wish to interfere with the profit-sharing arrangement, or with the wages and hours which have been fixed by the plan. But the employees must not be required to accept the plan as a condition of employment. "The very structure of the plan," ruled the Board, "contains the elements of employer domination and interference," and the fact that practically all the employees voted to adopt it, cannot be adduced to show that the plan is not "an employer dominated organization."

Whatever may be thought of the Board's reasoning, here we have another undoubted instance of the authority given it by the Wagner Act to disregard the worker's right to form the labor organization which he thinks best fitted to represent him. The Board's decision is perfectly in keeping with the language of the Act, if not with the purport stated in the preamble to the Act, since it must be admitted that under the terms of this profit-sharing plan, there could be no place for any other labor organization in the Duffy plants. It would be extremely difficult, however, perhaps impossible, to carry on a profit-sharing plan with some of the employees participating in it, but with others trying to overthrow it by the substitution of a union affiliated with the A. F. of L. or the C.I.O.

While it seems to us that the Labor Board is far too ready to see "employer domination" in labor organizations, it must be conceded that the decision in the Duffy case is fully justified by the Wagner Act. It is, therefore, another instance of the danger to the right of workers to choose their unions that is inherent in this Act. No doubt the House Committee now investigating the Board will recommend amendments safeguarding this right. On the whole, it seems that the Act, no less than the Board and its methods, needs revamping.

THE MASTER'S PENNY

NOT all who grow old grow wise. The unsophisticated assume that a wise man is known by his silver locks or his bald poll. The rest of us have learned that a septuagenarian can be nothing more than a silly old man.

But if, as we grow in age, we begin to suspect that we are not worth much after all, it may be that we are also growing in wisdom. All depends upon the temper in which we admit our small worth. Some old people tell the decades of their years serenely. They remember the aspirations of their youth, when life seemed so simple. There were no tolls on the wide and pleasant bridge between hard work and eminence, and they set out to work hard. Later, a period of disillusion set in, and clouds gathered over a world that was hard and biased. The prizes did not go to the worthy, but to the men who picked, or could control, the judges. Success, it seemed, came by favor, like kisses, not by worth.

Resignation succeeded the period of disillusion. We honestly admitted (to turn the application to ourselves) that, in view of our very limited abilities, we were fortunate to do as well as we did. Settling down, we were content to spend what was left of life in doing the humble tasks that fell to us. Our life had not been the triumph we had meant to make it, yet it was not a failure. It helped us, for all its faults and sins, to realize that what counts in God's sight is the will to do perfectly what He gives us to do.

It is only common sense to know that a competent street-sweeper is worth more than an incompetent artist. But it is wisdom to be willing to try to become a good street-cleaner, after we realize that we have no gift for art. "Who sweeps a room" or a street, as the poet sings, "makes that and th' action fine."

The Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Matthew, xx, 1-16) gives us a most consoling philosophy of life. The workers who came into the vineyard "early in the morning" received exactly the same wage as those who were hired at the eleventh hour, but instead of rejoicing that they were paid a living wage, they began to rail against the employer. What decision a modern labor board might make, we tremble to think, but in this parable Our Lord Himself sustained the employer. For God's Grace is given when He wishes, and as He wishes. Our part is to use it gratefully when it comes.

We who are old ought to thank God for those late-comers who in one splendid hour do more for God and God's children than we ever thought possible. Unfortunately, we are prone to criticize them, and to boast that we bore "the burden of the day and the heats," keeping silent, however, about the hours in which we sought the cooling shades, and laid down that burden for a nap. Heavy indeed is our responsibility if we quench the ardor of even one late-comer! But let not the eleventh-hour workers think too meanly of us oldsters who have so little to show for our years. For if we persevere, we shall receive, even as they, the Master's penny.

CORRESPONDENCE

IT SEEMS TO ME

EDITOR: I agree thoroughly with the viewpoint and conclusions expressed by Daniel M. O'Connell in *Steps That Lead to War Should Be Closely Examined* and by John P. Delaney in *To the Editors and the Readers* (AMERICA, January 6). I have carefully watched the trend of our Government and the local press. To me they are both biased and play up only those war aspects which redound to the advantage of Great Britain and to the detriment of Germany.

For example, the press, particularly the *New York Times*, toned down the seizure of the *Mormacsun* by the British and the resultant violation or disregard of the United States State Department's note of December 14 covering such a seizure.

Then again, the United States Government did not release to the press until this past Friday the notes of Lord Lothian, dated September and November, 1939, in which the British Government reserved all its rights to search and hold American shipping. It should be clear, I believe, that our State Department thought it unwise to release these expressions of British rights lest they jeopardize the success of the so-called Neutrality Bill.

I judge by your editorial, *The Still Subsisting War*, and the letter, "For Better Understanding," from a reader in Toronto, that your vigorous policy in keeping America at peace has brought the opposition of some English and French friends. The *Saturday Evening Post* evidently has met a like response, for in a letter of January 3 the editors state: "This magazine has repeatedly called to the attention of all Americans that we never again ought to fight one of England's wars. This policy has brought us a great deal of abuse from Canadian readers but we shall continue to follow it faithfully."

I was glad to read your comments about Dr. Lefkowitz in the January 6 issue. I know Dr. Lefkowitz, having served on several committees with him. While I do not agree with some of his views and opinions, I respect him for his courage, ability, and his sense of fair play.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOSEPH C. DRISCOLL

FRENCH CHAPLAINS

EDITOR: It will be a happy surprise to Helene E. Froelicher, who in a recent letter (AMERICA, January 6) praised "the 25,000 valiant priests who are now fighting in the French army" and asked "What about the anti-clericalism which has done so much damage in France?" to learn that by one of the many Concordats entered into by the French Government and the Holy See, military chaplaincies

have been set up by the French war department.

The chief of chaplains is Msgr. Sudour, whose function it is, as a member of the general staff, to submit in time of peace to the Minister of War for appointment as chaplains the names of the candidates recommended by their bishops, and in time of war to direct and coordinate the ministry of the chaplains.

These chaplains make up a corps of chaplains in the French army, just as ours do in the army of the United States; they, too, like ours are non-combatants. The Catholic chaplains number now 475 and are assigned thus: 400 to the military, 50 to the naval, and 25 to the air forces. The youngest bishop of France, Msgr. Audrian, Coadjutor-Bishop of Versailles, is one of the chaplains. The Protestants have been allotted 75 chaplains.

Grand Coteau, La.

TERENCE KING, S.J.

Major: Chaplains Reserve

INAUGURAL

EDITOR: If L. H. K., the author of a letter appearing over those initials in the January 6 issue of AMERICA, may be judged solely upon the testimony of that letter, he is pitiable.

His words in this letter evince an underlying spirit most unworthy of the American Catholic heritage to which he lays claim.

I stand by every citizen, clerical or lay, who strives, with firmness in the right as God gives him to see the right, to bind up this nation's sores, to care for those who bear the heavier burdens, and to do all which may achieve and cherish a lasting peace among ourselves.

Herman, Pa.

L. E. WARNER

FOR HEYWOOD BROWN

EDITOR: Heywood Brown had marched with the Church Militant for a scant six months' campaign, but nowhere in the ranks or among the officers is there one today who would deny him his Distinguished Service Cross. "Died in Action, facing the enemy" could be his epitaph.

There were those among Catholic writers who, with a poet's vision, seeing the blushing topmost boughs while yet the roots of the tree were held in frost-bound ground, had found in his brilliantly expressed, honest thought the reflection of eternal truth and so quoted him in the *Catholic World*. This at a time when Heywood Brown mistook the command to be "Left Dress."

In May, they who rejoiced that Chesterton's weapon had been lifted by hands worthy to wield it, now in December saw the frustration of all their hopes, for they had hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel. But on the sorrowing way to

Emmaus, perhaps, Heywood has left a clue as to why he was thus to suffer and so enter into his glory.

It seems to me the clue lies in his last article published in the *World-Telegram*. He headed it thus: "Reprinted at my own request . . . because I have bronchitis."

It was a Christmas story of the Wise Man who halted and delayed the richly laden caravan wending its way out of the East on its journey in search of Him Who is born King of the Jews.

He came hurrying back to his impatient companions holding in his hands a long-kept, paint-scarred, tin, tumbling, tiny toy.

"But we have gifts fit for a King," his companions protested. "You have gold, frankincense and myrrh for the King," answered the third Wise Man. "This is for the Child at Bethlehem."

Heywood Broun loved peace and the poor; the rôle of soldier would not be of his choosing; so, it may be, his Captain gave him an honorable discharge from the ranks of the Church Militant to give him peace and work in the New Jerusalem.

Our Blessed Lord, Jesus, had a tender name for the poor. He called them "these, my little ones." Even now Heywood Broun may be at work in a carpenter shop, on the street of the city pure gold, making gifts for these, God's little ones: gifts of work-shops, safe for men, and decent homes.

New York, N. Y.

AILEEN TEMPLETON

BOUQUET

EDITOR: I have read *AMERICA* for about nine or ten years and have considered many articles as excellent, but B. B. Brown's article on art (*AMERICA*, November 25) is super-excellent.

How truly Catholic she is, and what a beautiful soul to be added to the Mystical Body of Christ!

I wish it were possible for every artist to read this article; it would give much food for thought.

Brazil, Ind.

KATHRYN GAZDA

JUSTICE FOR AFRICA

EDITOR: Concerning Father LaFarge's remarks as to the part that colonies will play in a just peace (*AMERICA*, January 13), permit me to add that no lasting peace can be established in Europe without establishing at the same time lasting justice in Africa. Europe cannot exist as a highly industrialized continent without a rich source of raw materials and a market for its processed goods. The raw goods can be sweated out of Africa under the present set-up. But Africans who are paid a top wage of fifty cents a day cannot purchase the scissors, pants, radios, stoves, refrigerators and hymn books that Africa needs.

So I propose that the colonial system be scrapped, the concessionnaires be run into the Congo, and all the peoples of Africa who are not ready for self-government, as some of them obviously are, be put under an international trusteeship commissioned to arrange an economic and cultural rapprochement between Africa and Europe.

I was going to propose that the soldiers and second sons be withdrawn from Africa, and missionaries, school teachers and technicians be sent in. Europe can find no market for the goods its factories are able to turn out unless Africans are educated to want and use those goods and paid a just price for the raw materials of their own land with which to purchase them.

There should be no colonies in Africa, no zones restricted for the exploitation by any one or any group of nations, no tariffs, no spheres of influence. All the more advanced nations in the Americas, and Asia, too, should have free access to the raw materials of the Continent according to the needs of their industries, and to its markets.

No one would be foolish enough to suggest that kind of solution for Europe's problems to the Chamberlains and Daladiers. They would immediately dismiss the idea as "utopian." The most that can be expected of them is that they will bribe Hitler with a colony or two, which will not give Germany any more living space nor raise the standard of living of the German people, any more than the colonies have erased the destitution of Whitechapel or the black country.

In five years the Germans will speed up their war industries again, and in ten the British will again be resorting to piracy as a "reprisal" for the ruthlessness of the "Huns." For Europe will not have a twenty-year breathing spell this time.

It is possible, of course, that Europe may get a hundred-year breathing spell. For Brother Stalin lurks in the background, and if Western Europe fights itself to exhaustion, the Russian night may spread its gloom over the entire Continent, condemning Europe to a new "dark ages" which will really be dark without the quotes.

Jamaica, N. Y.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

AMATEURS AND MOVIES

EDITOR: There is something wrong with the movies in spite of all the money that goes into the making of them. We hear so often that the mechanics of the screen, the photography, the staging of the play have almost reached perfection. Is this true? Is it not possible the screen may have a special technic as yet undiscovered? Don't we often feel on seeing a picture that the story is told ineffectively? It may be a great story, a well known one, but how soon we forget it! There is nothing left but a blurry impression.

Is there too much crowded into a screen picture? Do we not often crave a simpler development? How about more static moments? Must situations flicker away before we fully grasp their meaning?

Why do not some of the amateur or experimental groups try the screen as their medium? The little theatres changed the world of drama. They proved that the huge expenses of the commercial theatre were often foolish and useless. They put life and new ideas on the stage. Why do not our amateurs tackle the movies?

New York, N. Y.

MARY QUINN

LITERATURE AND ARTS

PERSONAGES, NOT LOCAL COLOR, GIVE THE GLAMOR TO LITERATURE

JOHN EDWARD DINEEN

THE importance, to literature, of local color has been overstressed. Stressed properly, it can be shown to possess charm, even beauty: value, at any rate, of sorts. A good case can very probably be made out to show that local literature is the fountain-head of national literature. It ought to be recognized, however, that, in the opinion of most lovers of literature, the art possesses a universal quality, distinct from and superior to national qualities and local qualities. Educated people ought to be prepared to defend it, this universal quality, for without it literature ceases to be important.

Dumping the tea into Boston Harbor was one thing—that was a dramatic, symbolic, human gesture; hillbilly songs, Broadway cacophony, and such essentially parochial personages as Jesse James are another—they are eccentric, they are not sufficiently human, they are lacking in possibilities of glamor, and without glamor literature, as Chesterton pointed out in connection with the sober-sided George Eliot, is not literature at all.

Compare, as possible settings for literature, the Rockies and the Alps. The Rockies, especially in Idaho, are magnificent. But it takes more than scenic magnificence to establish an atmosphere of glamor. As for the Alps, on the other hand—Saints, Popes, kings, cardinals, poets, great men and great women of all sorts have traversed them; they have left their memories hovering high on Alpine summits, deep in Alpine valleys. In Alpine passes, the superb Saint Francis de Sales defended himself against highwaymen, fencing with them and driving them off. What has ever happened in the Rockies? The Rockies, of course, are not to be deplored for having had about a hundred years of history to the Alps' two thousand. But the point implied in the comparison ought to be appreciated: that glamor, the glamor of literature, at any rate, is occasioned not simply by places, but by the people who make places important.

If one gallant woman lives in Charleston, S. C., wears fluffy crinoline dresses, and dances the minuet, and another gallant woman lives on a bleak Oklahoma farm, wears severe woolen dresses, and does not dance at all, the chief fact of importance

to literature is the spiritual fact that both women are gallant. Their gallantry ought to be kept in the foreground, the crinoline, the wool, the minuets and all the rest of it in the background. There is something trivial, something dilettantish, something unhealthily sensuous in the fondness for local color sought for its own sake.

John Millington Synge's *Aran Islands*, that series of sedulous local-color impressions, is known to possibly one out of every hundred people who know his *Playboy of the Western World*, a play saturated with local color, of course, but rendered agreeable chiefly by reason of its universal humanity, by reason of a farcical situation which would be equally amusing if it were represented as happening in Brittany. Orson Welles' production of *Julius Caesar* revealed that there was a deeper appeal in the play than that of the togas. Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*, that distinguished if excessively gloomy modern masterpiece, would be just as masterly if it were represented as happening in Scotland; indeed, the events of its classic prototypes took place in the entirely imaginary city of Argos: Argos, the local color of which did not take up very much of the Greek dramatists' time, but which is an immortal city nevertheless, because immortal longings flourished there.

The immortal longings—those are what educated Americans, like educated Europeans, prefer to have as the substance of their songs and their stories, their plays and their paintings. If the immortal longings should flourish or fade, meet with happiness or unhappiness, in the midst of a tastefully controlled local color, then let the local color be acceptable. Otherwise, should it predominate, to the shades with it, and let the stars fall on Alabama!

One of the most interesting literary trends of the last five years or so has been the success of a number of books, anecdotal, regional, historical and biographical, which deal with things American. Since the trend shows no evidence of being either a mere fashion or a publisher's publicity stunt, but rather appears to have been perfectly spontaneous, it commands respect. To what may it be showing the way? What inspiration may be latent in it? We

have already had *Drums Along the Mohawk* and *Northwest Passage*—good, solid books. Perhaps we shall get works of genius: an American *Henry Esmond*, an American *War and Peace*.

But the word *trend*? Who, having had experience of trends, does not feel apprehensive about a new one? For there lurks in every one of them the possibility of folly. The sort of folly that, seizing upon and distorting a possibly sound idea, first accumulates a vast publicity, then becomes laughable, then loses the publicity, and disappears, taking with it into oblivion the sound idea it has vulgarized.

The cynical lubricities of a Salvador Dali are the distortion of a sound idea, an idea anticipated three centuries ago by El Greco, whose sublime "Burial of Count Orgaz" is surrealism in *excelsis*. But, by reason of Dali, is it idle to expect sensible people to think seriously, just at present, about surrealism, sir? That is an art-stunt, isn't it, used by ladies' department stores to advertise the latest mode in hats?

A trend in *Americana* may encourage follies of its own, though it should not be feared that they will surpass for sheer inanity the surrealist folly. The particular folly into which any nationalistic literature is easily apt to decline is the folly of excessive local color. Those who are enthusiastic about local color do not seem to discriminate among the varieties of it; almost any sort of local color satisfies them. They care not whether a song or a story or a play be merely locally colorful, or fundamentally human and universal in its appeal, with locally colorful externalities.

Variety is one of the manifestations of life, and local color, being a form of variety, is therefore a vital thing. Local folk art has usually been the source of national fine art; it seems always to be in at the beginnings; unquestionably, it serves a purpose. But surely at this late date it ought not to be so encouraged as to make any impending recrudescences of it more than mildly welcome.

Unfortunately, it is possible, it is almost to be feared, that we shall be deluged with books about phenomena like Jesse James, books about all the States, books about all the towns in all the States, each one of which will be saluted as typically American, as a contribution to the national self-awareness, and as the masterpiece of the week.

Meanwhile, the only typically American phenomenon of them all, the only one of them all of which it is important to be aware—our particular type of democracy—will probably be neglected. The human element in democracy, the acceptance by a man of the fact that all men are his brothers, is beautiful material for literature. It comes close to being a practical observance of the second great law of Christianity. It was strong in Abraham Lincoln; it is to Carl Sandburg's honor that he does not miss it in his recent monumental work. It was strong in Mark Twain. It is *not* strong in the writer who makes of Ole Svenson, of Minnesota, a colorful oddity simply because he says *Ya* and *Skool*. If you regard a man as being primarily a colorful oddity, you are not regarding him as a brother. If you regard a woman as being primarily the wearer of a

crinoline hoop-skirt, you are simply regarding her as a mannikin.

There is a painting by Velasquez, one of his greatest, called sometimes "The Surrender of Breda," sometimes "The Lancers." I have read interpretations of that painting which have concentrated exclusively on the details: the exquisite arrangement of the lances, the breath-taking effect of distance in the background, and so forth. The arrangement of the lances is exquisite, certainly; but what of that upon which, despite the lances, the eye first focuses? What of that noble gesture of chivalry of the conquering Spanish grandee toward the conquered Netherlander? What, in short, of the *human* element in the masterpiece? Is not Velasquez to be honored first of all for *that*, for the ease, the sympathy, the skill with which he conveys a spiritual quality, his appreciation of the grandee's nobility and courtesy? Overemphasizing local color is like not seeing the courtesy of the nobles for the lances they hold.

In his charming lecture on poetry, Dr. Phelps, in order to illustrate a point, tells a good story. The story is not copyrighted, because the Doctor himself borrowed it from Homer. During one of the later years of the Trojan War, a group of Trojan elders are basking in the sun on the walls of their city, and grumbling about the futility of all this warfare.

"Here we are, besieged, penned in, unable to get out, and for what? For a no-good sort of woman! It's outrageous!" Along the wall comes Helen. The elders look at her. She is beautiful! Then, with one accord: "This war simply *must* go on!"

The power of great poetry, human nature across the ages!

If the use of local color serves to reveal, to underline, to accent human nature, that use of it is legitimate. Let us insist upon the application of that principle, lest we accord to the minor art of the pastiche the honors which belong exclusively to the major art of literature.

CHERUBS

No one has seen the cherubim,
Nobody ever saw them fly.
Those spirits whom old artists made
A kindergarten in the sky.

The German painters crowned them with
Their children's curly yellow locks,
And hung about their chick-like wings
Long, flower-printed linen frocks.

In Italy where babies played
In dimpled nothings everywhere,
The Masters drew them cap-a-pie
And gave them sparrows' wings to wear.

Now, I would warily suggest
(I hope the notion is no sin)
That we depict them in those things
Our modern mothers dress them in.

FRAY ANGELICO CHAVEZ

BOOKS

ALWAYS, FROM MARXISM TO ULTIMATE DICTATORSHIP

THEY SOUGHT FOR PARADISE. By Stuart David Engstrand. Harper and Bros. \$2.50

AS a welcome contribution to Americana, this historical novel deals with the Swedish colony planted at Bishop Hill in Knox County, Illinois, by the fanatical preacher Erik Jansson in 1846. The communal living of the settlers is especially interesting today when Communism is prominent in the news; here as in Russia the experiment worked out to the absolute dictatorship of one man and the economic enslavement of all the others.

Romance runs high in Nils and Helga, both fictitious characters. When Jansson is gathering his followers in Sweden for emigration to America, Helga falls under the spell of his hypnotic preaching on sin and salvation, and refuses to marry Nils, her betrothed. Following the emigrants to Illinois, Nils carries on a bitter feud with Jansson first within the colony and then, when he is expelled, from the neighboring farm which he had bought. The usual pioneer fight against disease and starvation marks the early days of the settlement, but under the efficient, if tyrannical and selfish, rule of Jansson prosperity comes, and a fairly presentable village has grown up by the time Jansson is slain by a man whose wife he had kidnapped.

To his followers Jansson represented himself as something of a messiah, claiming faith in his divine mission and at times even worship as though he were God. By suggestion probably he performs some cures that seem to be preternatural and when death sweeps the colony first during a hard winter and next in the form of cholera, he holds his reputation by declaring that the dead had lacked faith. A smooth narrative style and a sense for the dramatic make the story very readable.

WILLIAM A. DOWD

INADEQUATE EXPOSITION OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

THE FLOWERING OF MYSTICISM. By Rufus M. Jones, Th.D., D.D., LL.D. The Macmillan Co. \$2.50

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broad enough to put Saint Paul in the company of Plotinus, Mahomet, Jacob Boehme and Margaret Prescott Montague. Dr. Jones sees in the experiences of such a varied company striking marks of similarity which tower above the explanations given those experiences by different communions. He does not seem to realize that beyond the psychological similarities there frequently lie ontological and theological differences which are tremendous.

The inner nature and causes of true mysticism can be discovered only from a basis of revealed dogma and under the guidance of the Church. For this reason Catholics will look in vain to Dr. Jones for an ultimate explanation of the nature of mystical experience.

FREDERICK A. HARKINS

A TIMELY BOOK FOR THE PRESENT HOUR

A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. By Thomas A. Bailey. F. S. Crofts and Co. \$6

THE title of this well-documented and highly authoritative volume emphasizes the power of public opinion in shaping the foreign policies of the United States. Although our Department of State has given direction to these policies, it has never dared to deviate very far from the attitudes and inclinations of the nation as a whole in major decisions. In demanding the Spanish-American War, the Washington Conference of 1921-1922, and the Kellogg-Briand pact—to cite only three examples—the people, literally forced the Executive to act against his will.

In view of the importance of public opinion in our democracy, no contemporary historian would be so naïve as to write the diplomatic history of this nation exclusively in terms of digests of the official correspondence. Professor Bailey has therefore wisely drawn upon contemporary material—particularly newspapers, magazines, cartoons, public addresses, diaries, letters, autobiographies—to give the reader a realistic understanding of the mood and temper of the American people at various periods in our national development, and to discover what pressure they brought to bear upon the Government to change or modify its course. The framework is chronological.

The simple, direct narrative begins with a brief consideration of certain formative influences that were at work during the Colonial era and ends with the presidential proclamations of neutrality against European belligerents in September, 1939. In addition to his own researches in source material, Professor Bailey skillfully utilized the most recent findings of a large number of specialists and secured the cooperation of a corps of experts to give preliminary critical reading to each chapter. The result is the best general introduction to American diplomatic history that has yet appeared.

During the past century and a half the presence of great hostile camps in Europe, to say nothing of domestic disturbances within those nations, has consistently operated to the advantage of America, and enabled her, while weak, to consolidate her position. "Sir," said the Swedish ambassador in London to John Adams in 1784, "I take it for granted that you will have sense enough to see us in Europe cut each other's throats with a philosophical tranquility." America has quite consistently followed such a course, and has profited enormously by it.

While adhering to a few fundamental policies, such as the Monroe Doctrine and the Open Door, the greater part of American diplomacy has been the adjustment of minor difficulties wherever they have arisen. This has frequently been done on an opportunistic basis, without reference to any of the fundamental principles. In general, the United States has pursued a policy of non-intervention, non-entanglement, and non-cooperation

toward Europe. The great exception, of course, was the World War. A careful reading of the chapters dealing with the quarter of a century following Sarajevo will be deeply instructive to Americans today who, in the last analysis, will determine foreign policy in the immediate, war-racked future. JOHN J. O'CONNOR

WITH OCCASIONAL RICH GLIMPSES

TURN EVER NORTHWARD. By Margaret Barrington. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. \$2.50

THOUGH *Turn Ever Northward* is not a great novel, it has something to recommend it, and will doubtless arouse some little interest in its yet unknown author. Margaret Barrington has written her first novel out of the restlessness of the World War and the Irish Rebellion. It is a stark story, bleak and somewhat frost-bitten. And yet it has a strength that is challenging and a sincerity that appeals.

The characters of this story are few, and two of them engage much of our attention. Justin and Louie are cousins who spent their childhood days in the home of their grandfather, whence they emerged to face the world. Justin, tiring of school, joins the regular army and goes off to war; Louie, a newspaper woman, marries an Irish rebel, who proves faithless. Eventually Louie and Justin turn to the north, to their ancestral house, and to each other.

The lack of warmth in this story is occasionally compensated for with little glimpses of Irish country life and customs. I fear, however, that the general impression created is not one to enhance the Irish way of life, as Miss Barrington portrays it. One is grateful for the simple charm of Aunt Molly and the dignity of the grandfather. They are a definite relief from the almost pessimistic realism of the other personages of this story.

With the material at hand Miss Barrington has done a fairly readable novel. Mellowness and charm will probably come to her later efforts as the fruit of a richer experience. JOSEPH R. N. MAXWELL

BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

THE SACRAMENTO. By Julian Dana. Farrar and Rinehart, Inc. \$2.50

"AMERICAN history began latest and ran fastest along the Sacramento," says Mr. Julian Dana, in his enthusiastic tale of California's River of Gold. This river flows three hundred and twenty miles from its source in Mount Shasta region, through the Golden Gate to the Pacific.

The vision of the late Constance Skinner Lindsay is largely responsible for this book, as well as several others in the "Rivers of America" series. She wrote: "The natural rhythm moving the pioneer life of America forward was the rhythm of flowing water. It is as the story of American rivers that the folk sagas will be told." It is her dream that "this is to be a literary and not an historical series. The authors of these books will be novelists and poets."

Julian Dana has divided his book into five parts: "Red Man's River," which fictionalizes as it may have been; there are few records of that period. "Conquest," tells of the Spanish and Mexican years. "Gold" depicts the mad rush for buried treasure, beginning in 1849. "Imperishable Land" traces the struggle to cultivate the rich soil, and the battles with flood and drought. "River Days" is the colorful record of boats, from the primitive canoes to the elaborate steam palaces of later years,

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interwoven with the lives of those picturesque captains and river folk who lived near and for the great river.

Mr. Dana, with his knowledge and love for his State, is well equipped to produce this satisfying little volume. He wrote *The Man Who Built San Francisco* and his *Sutter of California* was chosen as the official book of the Sacramento Golden Empire Centennial.

CATHERINE MURPHY

IF NOT VICTORY. By Frank O. Hough. Carrick and Evans. \$2.50

WHEN Abe Kronkhyte, the nineteen-year-old son of a Quaker farmer, went to the Bedford tavern in the summer of 1776, he had little sense of the political situation which had developed into civil war. He knew good and bad people on both sides and he saw no sense in shooting people on account of technical differences of opinion. Like thousands of others, though, he was drawn into the war and served as one of the famous Westchester guides. After bitter experiences in the field and in English prisons he came to realize that the patriots were not merely malcontents and that, despite their lack of unity, they stood for a way of life in which hired Hessians and contemptuous British regulars had no place.

Mr. Hough's story is at once a brief history of a phase of the Revolutionary War as seen through the eyes of a simple farmer, a thrilling narrative of battle, prison and escape, and a very successful union of the methods of the historical romance and the sense of reality. His knowledge of Westchester topography and of Tory New York should make his book more than usually interesting to the metropolitan reader, just as the general import will recommend it to all Americans. *If Not Victory* is a fine contribution to the growing list of authentic and well written accounts of our national origins. It is not quite in the same class as those of Kenneth Roberts, nor is its characterization as ample and exciting as that of *Gone with the Wind*, but it is, save for a single incident, heartily recommended. FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY

SAINT VINCENT FERRER. By Henry Ghéon. Sheed and Ward. \$2

OF living popular hagiographers, M. Ghéon, seconded by his expert translator-publisher, is the best known both in France and the English-speaking countries. The present volume is the latest in his series of brief psychographs of the personalities of the Saints.

M. Ghéon is very French, and he loves to use in his sketches of the canonized that sly, semi-ironic attitude which lends a proper pungency to his text. Then his translator adds a dash of Chestertonian Englishry and the result is a tart, but perfectly canonical, hagiography.

Saint Vincent Ferrer, the Dominican miracle-worker of the fourteenth century, is here presented to us against the exactly proper background: the turbid times of the Papal exile in Avignon and the revolts of those medieval brigands of leftist mysticism, the Waldensians and the Cathari. The result is a sun-smitten canvas in the manner of Guido Reni, all full of emphatic light-and-shade.

DAVID GORDON

OUR COMMON HERD. By Sue Sanders. Garden City Publishing Co. \$1

OUT of the memories of an amazingly full life, Sue Sanders has written this little book, quite frankly in the hope that it will be inspirational. It tells the story of a woman who expected nothing more from life than the chance to work hard, as the wife of a farmer first, and then alone, as waitress, boarding-house proprietress and finally a speculator and producer in oil. Hardships there were every step of the way, and mistakes aplenty, but they did not discourage her. She learned to profit by her errors, and she found a joy in the struggle against adversity. That she won out in the end, to become a successful "oil" woman, is a tribute to her courage and persistent faith in herself.

The story is told in simple, slangy style, with the warmth of a woman who likes people despite their petty faults. Sue Sanders' philosophy of life is funda-

mentally sound, in an earthy sort of way. Certainly it is a strong protest against the modern surrender of independence to relief rolls and the so-called security of State support. But the descriptions of farm life in the book will hardly help any back-to-the farm movement.

ROBERT A. HEWITT

SECRET SHOES. By Louise Crenshaw Ray. The Dial Press. \$2

WHY will modern poets insist on writing about smokestacks and furnaces and molten lead? However, if such verses there must be, Mrs. Ray acquits herself skilfully of the *tour de force* as is witnessed in that section of her new book called "Litanies to Steel," and was proved before in an earlier book too. But many readers will prefer her muse when it wanders in more traditional fields—when she describes the magnolia bloom "more regal than a sultan's bride" and the "yellow-throated jessamine," or remembers an English grandfather and the Berkshire he loved, or contemplates an American scene with her eye on the object:

O constant earth, imbue

Me with the strength of those who claimed these fields
From a hostile wilderness and from them drew
That sustenance of soul which nature yields
Her progeny! Then let my spirit go
Exalted and resplendent as a wood
Made luminous by autumn's checkered glow,
To meet life's winter hours with fortitude.

The secret shoes of imagination carry her with equal ease to whatever land she chooses. PAULA KURTH

WILLIAM PENN AS SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER. By Edward Corby Obert Beatty. Columbia University Press. \$3.50

THIS well-documented study of William Penn presents an excellent portrait of the Founder of Pennsylvania. In the main, we find proof of the religious reasons, the humanitarian ideals, and the rationalized policies which motivated this very edifying proprietor and statesman. But the sources, also, make clear that Penn was something of an opportunist and a compromiser, though never a hypocrite.

It is evident that, though democratic in theory, he was actually an imperialist, and far from an equalitarian in practice. A champion of religious tolerance, he nonetheless excluded Catholics from his amnesty, out of his English fear of the power of Rome. A protagonist of justice toward the Indians, he carefully saw to it that he enjoyed a monopoly of their trading, and practically achieved an alliance with them against the French pressure from Canada. But as Founders go, Penn certainly merits more admiration than many of them, and not a few of his views deserve hearing even now.

W. J. MCGARRY

WHITE NOON. By Sigrid Van Sweringen. Benziger Bros. \$2.50

THIS is a full novel of 367 pages on that portion of the life of Elizabeth Seton which takes place from her sailing to Italy with her sick husband until her return to America. If anyone is looking for a truly Catholic novel based upon the history of a very beautiful person, and a story well woven out of it, this is positively it. Even the most delicate conscience will not be offended by any departure from edification, because there is not a single one in this large book. It is the life of a saint built upon and made into a narrative with fine restraint, skill and quiet art.

It is not dull and moves along to nourish the heart of the reader with a sweetness and nobility that shines peacefully from a background of storm. The creative power of the author is given large room, and anyone must admit that she has done a grand job of it. So, if you want something good as well as holy, even if you are very, very careful and critical, this is the book to read and give. If you do not find it quite as splendid as *An American Woman*, it is your own fault for expecting that it ever could be.

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THEATRE

THE TROUBLE WITH MR. CARROLL. The admirers of Paul Vincent Carroll are very low in their minds these days. Most of them know what they think about Mr. Carroll's latest piece for the theatre—*Kindred*, briefly present at the Maxine Elliott Theatre, but few playgoers or critics can fully explain the disaster it represents.

Looked at dispassionately there seem only two possible explanations of Mr. Carroll's new play. The first is that he went to some old desk, found a dusty and forgotten effort at playwriting evolved by him in his salad days, had it recopied, and turned it over to confiding producers—Edward Choate and Arthur Shields—and through them to the public. Many misguided young playwrights have followed their first successes with untimely resurrections of early and untried efforts and have suffered as they deserved for doing it. But would he have handed the old manuscript over to the copyist without revision? Hardly. As a craftsman he would have known better, for there are situations and actions at utter variance with his lines and with the strange logic he offers us.

The more probable theory is that Mr. Carroll was depressed by the condition of the world. He was under contract for a new play. He was not in the mood to write it. He had a half-formed plot and a few vague ideas floating in his mind. With very few and very slight labor pains he gave us *Kindred*—and it will take him a long, long time to live down the memory of that still-born production. He has given his public a post-graduate course as to how much he needs to learn. It may require many seasons and much good work to lure his friends back, and some of them may never return.

Let us touch on a few of young Mr. Carroll's extraordinary and confused ideas in *Kindred*. His first is that the creative artist, whatever his human and ethical lacks, should inherit the earth. Carroll underlines this theory by showing us two utterly worthless human creatures, first father, then son. The father waves a crayon pencil in the air, leaves a mediocre crayon sketch behind him to prove that he is a genius, continues his progeny through a girl of the street that genius may go on, and commits suicide. For another of young Mr. Carroll's theories is that women do not count in the world, except as reproducing agents, and that the worst of them is as good as that as the best!

All this is in the prolog. Twenty odd years later, the artist's son, who carries a fiddle around woods and fields to prove that he is a genius, supplies the rest of the drama. He is as petty, as selfish, as conscienceless as his father was. He is also mischievous and malicious. But young Mr. Carroll does not know he is any of these things. Mr. Carroll ardently admires both dead father and living son. Are they not artists? Are they not therefore the proper inheritors of the earth? Mr. Carroll thinks so. And when his young hero is shut away at the end of the play for the good of the community, Mr. Carroll's text almost sobs aloud.

The producers, as misguided as the author, nevertheless engaged a superb company for this dramatic mischance. Aline MacMahon was the heroine—a simple and dignified one. Barry Fitzgerald, as the grocer who married her, was more of a man than all the other male characters together. But of course the star performer was Arthur Shields, as the artist's son. Shields acted the leading rôle superbly, almost gave it high quality, almost gave it truth. His acting, like that of other characters, was frequently at variance with the lines, but for that reason it sometimes brought the play to life. However, let us forget *Kindred*. Let us forget Mr. Carroll, too, till he comes back with the only possible apology—a worthy play!

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

RAFFLES. E. W. Hornung's polished amateur cracksmen, the prototype of all dinner-jacketed jewel thieves, has been cut to the latest pattern in all save his moral sense. He lacks that perverted respect for property ascribed by Chesterton to thieves, since he insists on returning his loot to its owners. Starting with such a premise, this could be only a more leisurely, humorous and agreeable type of melodrama. Sam Wood has directed it in that spirit, but has managed to make it exciting in the modern manner without decimating the cast by machine guns. According to the familiar plot, Raffles uses his entree into the best society to match wits with Scotland Yard in a series of daring robberies, being careful always to return the pawns of the dangerous game to their rightful owners. He evades the law until he is prepared to give himself up voluntarily. The whole production has the glossy, unreal tone of drawing-room comedy. David Niven is wholly successful in portraying the adventurous gentleman, and Dudley Digges is a perfect foil as the unimaginative agent of the Yard. Olivia de Havilland provides the romantic touch and Dame May Whitty is effective in support. This is excitement on the lighter side for adults. (United Artists)

THE EARL OF CHICAGO. There is a measure of originality in this story of a gangster's inheritance of an English title, but it is strained into wilful eccentricity before the film has run its course. Apparently it was designed to be different, whatever the cost in credibility and natural motivation. The situation is not helped by Robert Montgomery's independent virtuosity. The action, covering the Chicago mobster's rise to the peerage and his fall as the result of the murder of a revengeful lawyer who has humiliated him, is such that any further grotesqueness in the acting would tip it over the borderline of reasonable fiction, and Mr. Montgomery is much too insistent on the psychopathic quirks of his criminal. Richard Thorpe does manage to create interest in the odd situations at first, but is unable to sustain it throughout. Edward Arnold and Reginald Owen make the most of their rôles in what would have been unusual adult entertainment had it ever gotten past the stage of being just queer. (MGM)

MEXICAN SPITFIRE. This farce conforms to the pie-throwing recipe for screen entertainment, calling for broadly rendered characters and situations, and a good deal of wasted motion. Leslie Goodwin's direction is far from subtle as he spins the tale of a young man's troubles with a Mexican bride, originating with a disapproving aunt and ending in near bigamy. Lupe Velez is as violent as ever, with Leon Errol supplying the bulk of the fun in an adult broadside. (RKO)

INVISIBLE STRIPES. Warden Lewis E. Lawes is remotely responsible for the theory of this film and hence, one supposes, for its thesis that paroled criminals revert to type because society turns its back on them in their search for useful employment. The point is argued on a purely materialistic plane, and no antidote to crime is suggested except perhaps that honesty be made more profitable. The moral implications of wrongdoing are apparently not recognized, at least not by the Hollywood school of penology. Lloyd Bacon does not linger over the exposition anyway, but allows the film to slip into the usual noisy melodrama. The action centers about a convict whose experiences, while out on parole, corroborate the film's thesis to a suspicious degree. George Raft, Humphrey Bogart, William Holden and Jane Bryan do not exactly distinguish an adult picture already notable for sound effects rather than sound thinking. (Warner)

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THE 1939 holiday season registered greater activity than did Yuletides of recent years. . . . A faster and wider distribution of Christmas presents was noted. In the Los Angeles section, second-story men kept the presents circulating at a rapid tempo. Burglars of other areas likewise accelerated the movement of both Christmas presents and trees. . . . New York City's Department of Sanitation reported 5,000 more tons of gift wrappings, turkey bones and tinsel than last year. . . . In Kansas City, hundreds of horses, as invited guests, made merry at a special Christmas dinner of apples, oats, hay and lump sugar in the Humane Society's stable. . . . Unemployment decreased. A young lady in Birmingham, Ala., was given a job as hostess on a trolley car. . . . New judicial decisions established precedents. . . . A man's sock with a cake of soap in it was classified as a dangerous weapon. A robber had admitted socking hold-up victims with the reinforced sock. . . . Individuals biting and scratching each other to obtain seats in subways are not guilty of disorderly conduct, a New York magistrate ruled. . . . Used-car buyers showed greater satisfaction with their purchases. In Meyersdale, Md., a resident bought a used car, found \$500 under the back seat. . . . Purchasing power manifested greater flexibility. In Edenton, N. C., a Negro gave a mortgage on his pigs for a new suit of clothes. . . . Tests for auto-drivers licenses were becoming noticeably stricter. In Harrisburg, Pa., the car driven by a woman taking the test began climbing the steps leading up to the very building where the licenses are issued. Though she stopped the auto before it could enter the license bureau, the examiner refused to give her a passing mark. . . . The relation between crime detection and cheese was clarified. In Pleasantville, N. Y., a grocery-store burglar was caught through a plaster cast of his toothmarks on a piece of cheese. . . . A staggering new headache cure was unveiled. A Tennessee dynamiter, seen to be staggering on a Nashville street, was arrested for drunkenness. He explained that chewing dynamite provided the only relief for his chronic headache, though it made his walk a bit wobbly. Freed by the Judge, he bit off another piece of dynamite, staggered out of the court room. . . . With Easter much earlier this year, Midwest hens, as though well-informed concerning movable feasts, commenced producing a record supply of eggs. . . .

Glimpses of Life. . . . Reports from 316 cities of the United States for the first eleven months of 1939 showed substantial increases in crimes of larceny, burglary, aggravated assault, rape and murder. . . . And "white-collar criminality" is also reaching new highs. . . . Dr. Edwin H. Sutherland of Indiana University, retiring president of the American Sociological Society, intimated that crime among business and professional men caused greater losses than burglaries, and denied that crime is "closely correlated with poverty or with psychopathic and sociopathic conditions associated with poverty." . . . As birth control spreads, so does crime which it was supposed to cure. . . . Perhaps a recent occurrence may provide a clue to the cause underlying the high incidence of crime in the United States. Mrs. Dorothy Sherwood, released from prison after serving time for killing her two-year-old son, said: "It would not have happened if I had not lost my faith in religion. I read too many anti-religious books which I got from public libraries. I have since learned that the highest joy in life is spiritual and not material." . . . Godless reading, godless schools are producing godless men and godless women. What else could they produce?

THE PARADER